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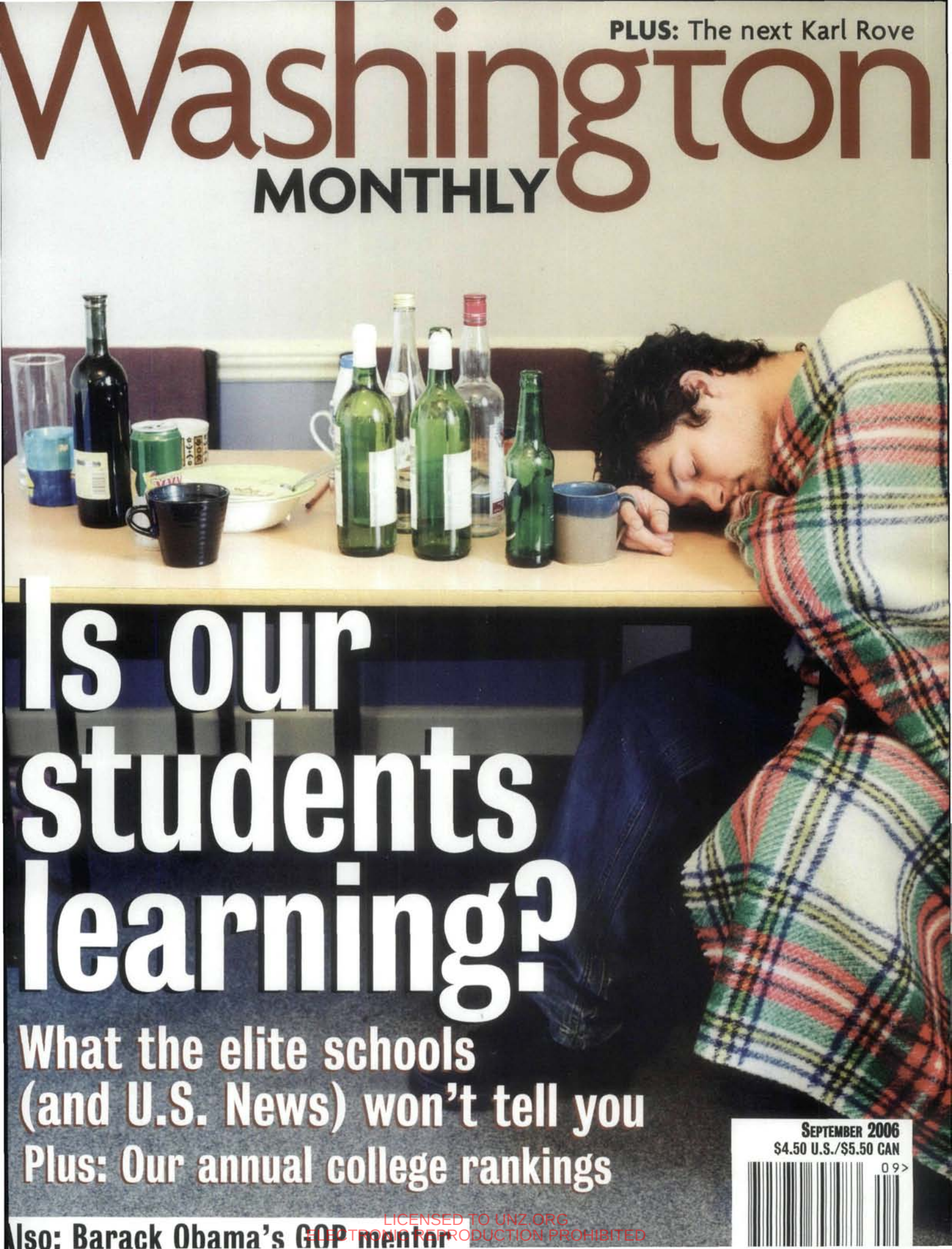

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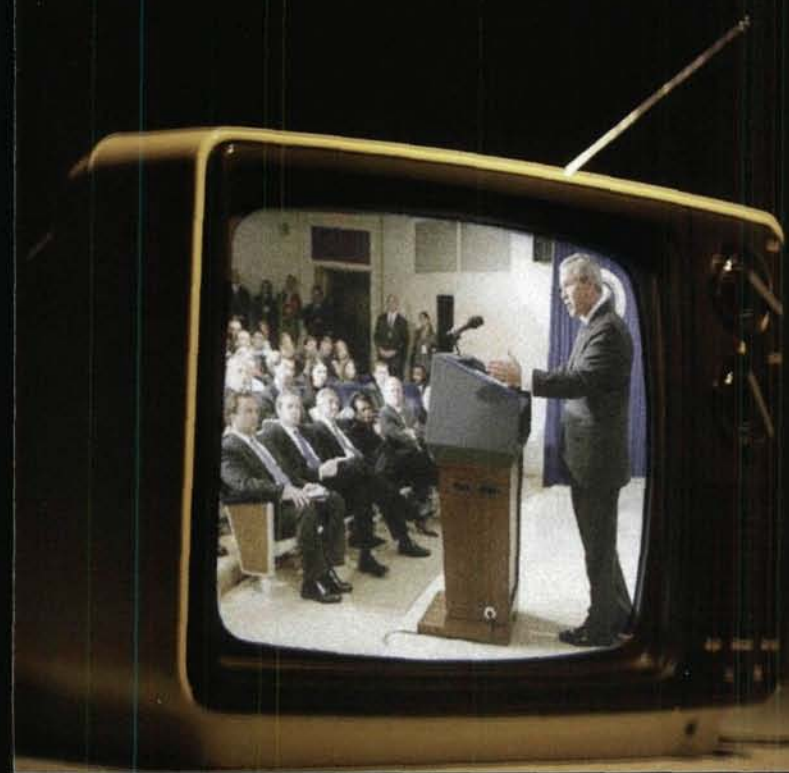

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Volume 38, No. 9
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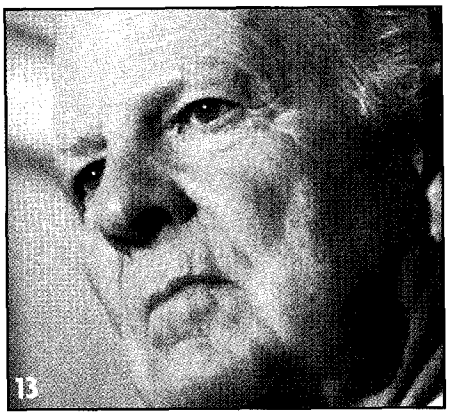

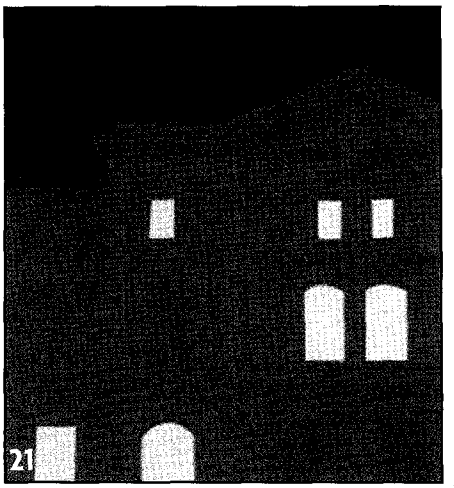

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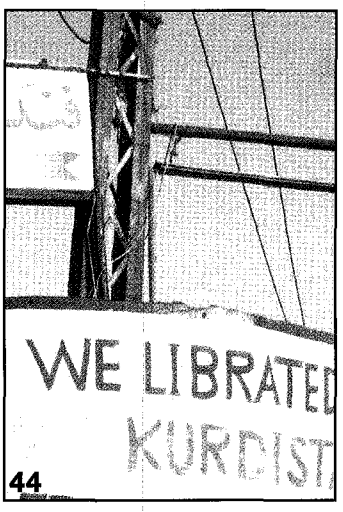

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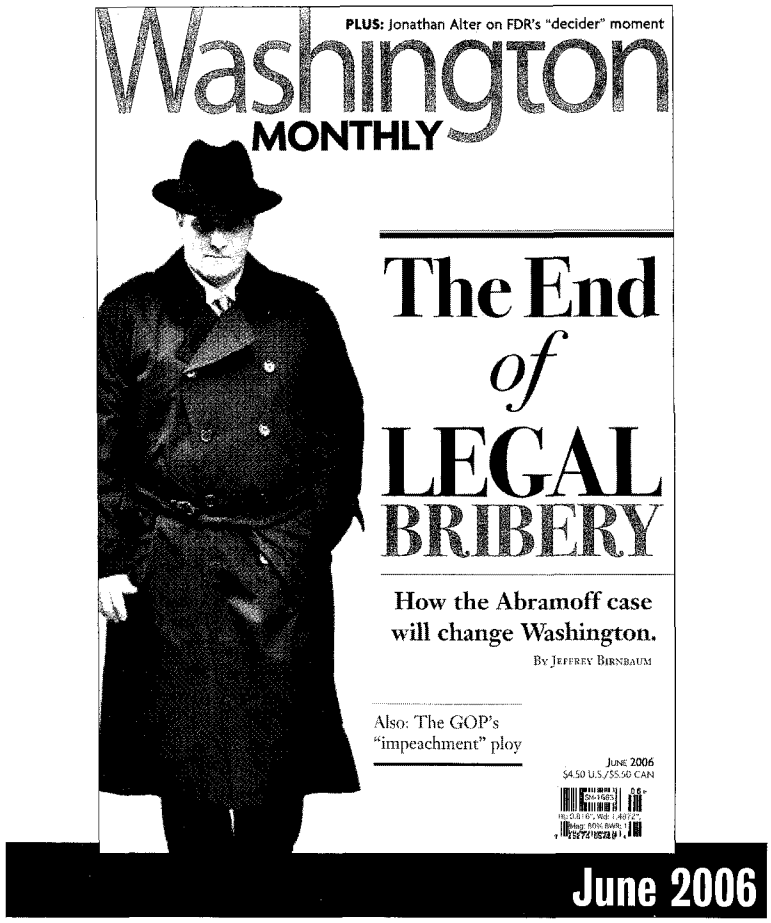
LETTERS



Bribery and the Beltway

Jeffrey Birnbaum ("The End of Legal Bribery," June) writes a good story on how Jack Abramoff's conviction may open the floodgates to legally tying questionable campaign contributions to bribery charges.

Unfortunately, he keeps a good story from being a great one by throwing in this sentence at the start of the sixth paragraph: "At the same time, congressional campaigns must be privately funded."

Must be? I'm inferring that Birnbaum is implying there's some constitutional restriction. He passes right by the whole issue of public campaign financing of congressional elections as though it doesn't even exist.

He also ignores the fact that earlier this year, public campaign financing legislation (albeit, legislation that would have been punitive to third-party candidates) started circulating.

A good story, but it could have been a great one.

Steve Snyder
Lancaster, Texas

Generals against Rumsfeld

This is an excellent piece that precisely captures this administration and its political ideologies ("Hawks for Dissent" by Ralph Peters, June). Like most administrations, it reflects the attitudes of the president in charge. The fact that George W. Bush has no meaningful military experience means that, when put in a wartime environment, he's totally lost. When his previous track record is analyzed, it reveals a succession of failures at endeavors he knew nothing about. In fact, it is predictive of the actions he has taken since he started the Iraq conflict. Since his father had always bailed him out before but wasn't going to for this "adventure," he went looking for a father figure to bless his Iraq adventure and even take charge of it. This also gave him a political straw man to hide behind.

> "The fact that G.W. Bush has no meaningful military experience means that, when put in a wartime environment, he's totally lost."

Like most of Bush's schemes in the past, this one hasn't worked out either. Because it's obvious now that Iraq isn't going to establish the legacy he had in mind, Bush desperately needs Rumsfeld as a flack catcher. He's no more incompetent than the rest of the sycophants he surrounds himself with. Like Vietnam, this misadventure is going to cost us dearly far into the future.

T. A. Glidewell
Stephenville, Texas

Ralph Peters may be correct that it is bad to have Donald Rumsfeld, "who never saw combat, interpreting warfare to a president who never saw combat." But Peters goes on to make a weak case for his real agenda—to bash Rumsfeld and President Bush and to defend the six retired generals who recently called for Rumsfeld to be fired. First, he points to successful "partnerships" between active-duty generals and Presidents Lincoln, Wilson, and Franklin Roosevelt, which

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worked because the generals presumably gave those presidents expert and "unfiltered" advice. Perhaps true. But then he links them to the six, retired "dissident" generals who, rather than offering unvarnished and private advice to Bush, issue a public call for him to fire his secretary of defense. Is Peters seriously suggesting that FDR would have taken kindly to retired generals going to the press to second-guess his decisions or appointments?

Second, Peters bemoans the fact that these generals are now "automatically blackballed from...lucrative defense industry jobs...and they'll never be offered plum posts in any future administration" because of their criticism. But, in his next breath, he says that such contracts or jobs "corrode the ethics" of retired senior officers. Why is he complaining about the loss of something he finds so sleazy?

Finally, he contends that these poor, retired generals (who collect rather handsome pensions, by the way) have been subject to "character assassination" by the administration. I don't spend a lot of my time in the fringe blogosphere, but that's not what I've seen. I've seen them lionized in the mainstream media. Indeed, I've never seen the media fawn over generals who support the administration, retired or otherwise, like they have over these six. It seems that Peters wants them held immune from any disagreement or criticism. Free speech cuts both ways. They have every right to attack Rumsfeld, and those who disagree have every right to attack them.

TAYLOR ARMERDING
Ipswich, Mass.

Fake Diamonds

I read "Poor Sports," (Amy Sullivan, June) and I agree that the Washington Wizards could use more support. As a fan that goes to nearly 20 games a season, it would be great to see more fans in the Verizon Center create a louder, more partisan environment. But when you make a generalization about "sports fans" in D.C. and base your conclusion on turnout for Wizards games, you have conveniently left out what is most important to nearly all Washingtonians—our beloved Redskins.

I have witnessed many "transplants" come to D.C. and embrace the Redskins, even amidst their dismal past decade. Their home, also the largest stadium in the NFL, is sold out for years to come, and the support/coverage/discussion of the team never wanes.

Keep in mind, while you were in Michigan enjoying the fruits of the Pistons' success in the eighties, native Washingtonians were celebrating our Super Bowl victories in the streets of Georgetown. What is unique about Washington, and makes the story's argument somewhat cogent, is that many people live in D.C. for only a few years because of a new administration, an internship on the Hill, etc. They come, they see the sights, and they may go to a game or two wearing their "native" team colors. But for those who live, have lived, and plan to live in D.C. for many years, the first order of business is devotion to the Redskins.

In order to properly assess your hypothesis, you would have to ask a Washingtonian, "If you moved to Detroit, would you become a Lions fan?"

My guess is that the unanimous answer to that would be, "Why the hell would I move to Detroit?"

ROB BIRGFELD
Via email

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Tilting at Windmills

By Charles Peters

Cut and run I

One of my favorite columnists, Molly Ivins, points out that after roundly condemning Democrats as a bunch of cut-and-run sissies, the administration proceeded to announce its own version of cut and run when Gen. George W. Casey Jr. unveiled his plan to reduce the number of combat brigades in Iraq from 14 to five or six, with the withdrawal neatly timed to begin in September, two months before the November election. Molly comments, "They don't call him George W. Jr. for nothing."

Why they don't fight

One reason we continue to be mired in Iraq is the painfully slow progress made in training Iraqi troops to replace our own. And one reason for the slowness is the living conditions of the Iraqi soldiers. For this point, I'm indebted to *The Wall Street Journal*'s Greg Jaffe, whose original reporting highlights the contrast between the Iraqi and American troops at Camp Taji:

"On one side, about 10,000 U.S. Army soldiers live in air-conditioned trailers. There's a movie theater, a Taco Bell and a post exchange the size of a Wal-Mart, stocked with everything from deodorants to DVD players.

"On the other side are a similar number of Iraqi soldiers... [who] live in fetid barracks built by the British in the 1920s, ration the fuel they use to run their lights and sometimes eat spoiled food that makes them sick."

The Obama drama

There is no doubt in my mind that Barack Obama has the raw material to get elected president and govern the country wisely—and probably more of it than any of the other potential Democratic candidates. He is already a great speaker, and he could not have risen to the top of the *Harvard Law Review* without having an outstanding mind. He seems to have the right values and speaks easily of the Christianity he shares with most Americans. The greatest president of the last century, Franklin Roosevelt, was not embarrassed to do that. Indeed, he sold his programs like Social Security and Lend-Lease as applied Christianity.

Of course, other doubts about Obama remain. One wishes he had more experience, especially in the executive branch of government, where Roosevelt's eight years as assistant secretary of the navy at the intersection of the policy-makers and the civil service prepared him to establish the New Deal and win the war. John F. Kennedy had a similar lack of experience in the executive branch and it showed at the Bay of Pigs. But Kennedy had the capacity to learn. He was intensely curious, unlike the present incumbent. I look for signs of such curiosity in Obama that will mean he has Kennedy's capacity to grow. One sign to look for is evidence that he really listens.

I remember during the West Virginia primary in 1960 escorting Kennedy to one press interview after another in which I was stunned by the way he really listened to questions, with his answers displaying an appreciation of their unspoken subtext, even when the inquiry was less than artful. Everyone found out about this quality during Kennedy's presidential news conferences. You can hear them now on tape, and excerpts occasionally appear in television documentaries. Kennedy actually enjoyed the give-and-take instead of hating it, as Bush does. One good sign is that I'm told Obama displayed precisely this quality answering questions during a recent appearance at the National Press Club.

"Obama speaks easily of the Christianity he shares with most Americans. The greatest president of the last century, Franklin Roosevelt, was not embarrassed to do that."

And $20,000 will buy you a little servant boy

Now not only can rich moms and dads buy their kids the leg up that a private school can offer, it also appears they

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can help little Jason or Jennifer take another step along the path to success. According to *Slate*'s Timothy Noah, internships are now for sale at several of those auctions private schools use to raise money. A $10,000 bid could get Junior inside a major investment bank or into another lucrative career opportunity.

Cut and run II

My own view of cut and run is this. It's always going to be a terrible time to leave. The same was true in Vietnam. When you take responsibility for establishing a democratic government in another country, especially one with a radically different culture, it is likely to be a precarious proposition for as long as can be foreseen. Any time you leave, you're going to be deserting the Iraqis—or the Vietnamese—you've led to rely on your dedication to democracy and freedom. It is never a painless thing to do. That's why I was against getting into Iraq in the first place, and why I think that those who opposed the escalation in Vietnam were right. Once the initial stupidity has occurred, however, responsibilities are assumed that are hard to shed. This is the way fools lure us into complicity in their folly.

Steady on there, tiger

One caution to Barack Obama. He recently confided to an interviewer that he and Hillary Clinton have a "huge advantage by virtue of our notoriety… we don't really have to chase the cameras." Putting yourself in the same league as the frontrunner is usually not a good idea.

Holy rollers

More details have emerged on the Ralph Reed-Grover Norquist-Jack Abramoff connection. Reed, the former head of the Christian Coalition and losing candidate for lieutenant governor of Georgia, was not a minor player in the Abramoff scandal. It seems he received a total of $5.3 million from Abramoff's clients for the sublime hypocrisy of opposing gambling where it would compete with the casinos of Abramoff's clients.

Incidentally, more than one million of this was funneled through Norquist, guru of right-wing lobbyists and close buddy of Karl Rove. One email of Abramoff's revealed by *The Washington Post* says, "Call Ralph re Grover doing pass through." I'm beginning to suspect that this scandal, if pursued vigorously by investigators, could be of Watergate dimensions, reaching major Washington figures.

Why the lines never got shorter

Bureaucracies tend to become top heavy as employees rise in salary and rank. A recent example comes from West Virginia, where a report recommends reducing management positions at the Department of Motor Vehicles. One position targeted is an executive assistant to the DMV's commissioner. Phil Kabler of *The Charleston Gazette* points out that the commissioner already has two executive secretaries, another executive assistant, and a deputy commissioner.

HBO only *seems* like your friend

I must say I was depressed by that recent study showing that people said where they had three close friends in 1985, they now have only two. According to Knight Ridder's Ely Portillo, "the number who say they have no one to discuss important matters with has doubled."

My guess is that there are two main factors at work here. One is the explosion in the number of channels available on cable television, meaning that there is always something reasonably interesting to be found with another click of the remote. The result is that I spend twice as much time glued to the tube as I did 20 years ago.

The other factor is the computer. Time spent on email does offer contact with other people, but many computer users are addicted to surfing the web and playing games alone.

Whatever the reason, the change is definitely not for the better. As Robert Putnam, the author of *Bowling Alone*, said, "Well-connected people live longer, happier lives."

Right all along

It may be that those of us who have complained about Dick Cheney's increasing right-wing rigidity simply didn't know the man well enough earlier. Robert Hartmann, who worked with Cheney in Gerald Ford's White House, wrote in his book *Palace Politics*, published way back in 1980, that "whenever his private ideology was exposed, he appeared somewhat to the right of Ford, Rumsfeld, or, for that matter, Genghis Khan."

We wish W. would read this cable

Evidence of deteriorating conditions inside Iraq is provided by the U.S. government itself, in the form of an internal State Department cable obtained by *The Washington Post*'s Al Kamen. The cable, marked "sensitive," discusses problems recently experienced by the nine Iraqi employees of the American embassy's public-affairs section.

The brother-in-law of one had been kidnapped. Another had a Kurdish neighbor who was being evicted from her home of 30 years as part of an attempt at ethnic cleansing, which an Iraqi editor cited by the embassy says is taking place in almost every province. "Employees all confirm that by the last week of May, they were getting one hour of power for every six hours without"—this as the temperature rose to 115 degrees. Female employees said that they were the victims of "stepped-up" harassment, pressing them not to drive cars and to dress conservatively, from wearing veils to full *abayas*.

Speaking of cutting and running...

If you can stand more bad news, consider a report by Sabrina Tavernise of *The New York Times* that "increasing portions of the [Iraqi] middle class seem to be doing everything they can to leave the country." This new evidence confirms a trend reported earlier by the *Times*' Robert Worth. A quarter of the country's middle class has acquired passports in the last 10 months. And the number of letters issued by the Ministry of Education permitting a parent to take his children's academic records abroad doubled in the last year.

He always did have trouble making up his mind

Betty Beale, a veteran columnist who covered Washington society for six decades, died this summer. Her obituary

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revealed that her romances included an affair with Adlai Stevenson. It will surprise more than a few readers to learn that the dumpy Stevenson, who definitely did not reek of sexual magnetism, actually had an extremely active romantic life.

Beale explained, "He wasn't handsome; he did not have a physique that draws feminine raves. But he had a marvelous speaking voice, great charm, elegance, kindness and a delicious wit."

Stevenson may have been even more of a Lothario than John Kennedy. One historian lists 10 women who succumbed to what one called his "emotionally promiscuous nature." And Betty Beale did not even make that list. Nor did one other woman I knew who told me about her affair with Adlai. Still another female friend, as I recounted gossip about another affair he had had with a woman in London, became agitated and angry. It seems that she had been in London at the same time participating in similar activities with Stevenson, and couldn't believe that practically simultaneously, Adlai was doing it with another lady.

"It will surprise more than a few readers that the dumpy Adlai Stevenson may have been even more of a Lothario than John Kennedy."

They must think that there's nothing left to investigate

Having just drifted into the realm of the frivolous myself, I can hardly adopt a high moral tone with this next item. But have you noticed how the cover stories of the newsmagazines—*Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News & World Report*—have been drifting away from serious subjects? A cover from the July issue of *U.S. News* illustrates the trend: "Secrets to a Stress-Free Summer."

And Richard Cohen points out that "Time Inc., which reportedly paid about $4 million for pictures of Brangelina's baby, recently let go of two of the best investigative reporters in the business, Donald Barlett and James Steele. The company said it can no longer afford them."

Barlett and Steele *are* among the very best. They have won the *Monthly*'s journalism award several times and have often been cited in this column.

How did he make ends meet in the odd years?

Back to West Virginia for a minute. I regret to report that the folkways of my native state continue to resist the injunctions of civics textbooks. *The Charleston Gazette*'s Tom Searls recently revealed that "more than 6,000 dead people have been identified remaining on West Virginia's voting rolls." In another article, Searls reports that Glen Dale "Hound Dog" Adkins, the county clerk of Logan County, has pled guilty to selling his vote in 1996. "Hound Dog" had also been charged with "taking money from individuals to use to buy votes for them and others...in 1992, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000 and 2002."

Running out the clock

In my book, *How Washington Really Works*, I argue that in this city, make-believe is widely viewed as the safest path to survival. Writing memoranda and attending meetings give the appearance of action, but avoid doing anything that risks upsetting the apple cart. *The Washington Post*'s Ruth Marcus offers a recent example. Whatever happened, she asks, to all that talk of lobbying reform in the wake of the Abramoff scandal? "Run out the clock" and "avoid the subject" were the formulas used by Congress. Hearings took up time and offered the appearance of doing something. Any threat to the members' comfort, like requiring them to pay the actual cost of their rides on corporate jets, was avoided simply by agreeing not to let the matter come to a vote.

How J. Edgar supported the Reds

Another prominent Washingtonian who died this summer was William Hundley, who rose to prominence as the prosecutor who persuaded Joe Valachi to blow the whistle on the Mob, and then became the defense lawyer for such luminaries as John Mitchell and Vernon Jordan. His obituary tells of when he worked for the F.B.I in the 1950s. During that time, he said that the Communist Party of the USA was largely supported by J. Edgar Hoover: "His informants were nearly the only ones that paid their party dues."

Hundley tells of reading one informant's report: "I came across a line where a guy jumped up and said, 'Let's cut out all the bull. When are we going to start the revolution?' I got excited and ran to the FBI supervisor. All the agents had a big huddle and they came back and said, 'Well, you can't use that, that's one of our informants.'"

Teaching to the test

We have previously recounted the incompetence of the D.C. fire and emergency department in the death of *New York Times* reporter David Rosenbaum. Now comes the news that when another ambulance failed to answer an emergency call, an investigation revealed that the crew was parked on a side street, sound asleep.

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Neil Hanson
UNKNOWN SOLDIERS

The Story of the Missing of the First World War

The New York Times hails
"An unforgettable picture of life in the hottest sectors of the Western Front."
—William Grimes

"A moving testament to the futility of war
...To honor the 3 million fallen soldiers who were never identified in World War I, Hanson relates the individual stories of three young men—a German, an Englishman, and an American [who] were lost in the area of the Somme River."
—*Booklist*

"One of the best books I've read on the insanity of life in the trenches"
—*Daily Mail*, UK

"Vivid, sobering...
Hanson lets the voices of the unknowns speak across a bloody century with lessons for the new one."
—*Publishers Weekly*

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One factor in the incompetence of the ambulance crews was recently reported by the *Post*'s Colbert King, who discovered that answers on the test given to qualify technicians were distributed in advance of class.

The world's mayor

Meanwhile our mayor Anthony Williams continues to be AWOL. Why stay in Washington dealing with all these sticky problems when he can travel? In the period between June 7th of last year and June 11th of this, he took 11 international trips, including three to London, where you can be confident he was not studying how to improve emergency medical services.

Giving themselves Mr. Fingar

Usually the fellow who tells the Bush White House the truth gets punished. As, for example, were Lawrence Lindsey for being right about the cost of the Iraq war, and Gen. Shinseki for being right about the number of troops needed after Baghdad was taken. But recently, the administration actually promoted—or permitted John Negroponte to do so—at least one truth-teller. Thomas Fingar, who as director of the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research had refused to support the administration's misrepresentations about Iraq's nuclear program, has been named by Negroponte as his deputy in charge of analysis.

Cut and run III

Another columnist, Jonathan Alter of *Newsweek*, has an idea for the Democrats on how to deal with the cut-and-run accusation without getting into involved discussion of the timing of withdrawal. It is to say this to voters: "If you believe that the Iraq war is a success, vote Republican. If you believe it is a failure, vote Democratic."

Straight shooting

Audrey Hudson of *The Washington Times* has great sources among the federal air marshals. One of their concerns, she reports, is that "their guns are loaded with bullets capable of running through more than one person, metal doors, and thick glass," penetrating most of the material in the plane. So that the bullet aimed at a terrorist could go through him to kill or injure another passenger or a crew member. It could also damage the plane's hydraulic and flight control system, leading to catastrophe.

The marshals say that their present ammunition should be replaced by frangible bullets "which break into smaller pieces on impact and thus have limited power to exit the target." Makes sense to me.

Ben Stein's advice

I fear the Bush administration is beyond shame. But if anything might penetrate their thick hides, it is this from an open letter to the secretary of the treasury, Henry Paulson, from the columnist Ben Stein, who is not some rad lib, but a certified conservative of long standing:

"May I suggest that having the lowest taxes in 65 years on high-income taxpayers is not really as prudent as it might be if we were not running stupendous deficits, with far worse in the future?"

You can't get any cheaper than that

Unfortunately, not all of the rich are as generous as Bill Gates. "The Walton family owns Wal-Mart stock worth more than $90 billion, more than twice the value of the Gates family's Microsoft stock," reports David Cay Johnston of *The New York Times*. "But the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is 35 times larger than the Walton Family Foundation."

If you're saying, "well, that's only one family," consider that 47.7 percent of estates worth $20 million or more gave not one cent to charity in 2004.

Who knew?

Back to Betty Beale. As many of you know, one of my minor crusades has been to persuade younger historians that they are wrong to depict the American public as ignorant of Franklin Roosevelt's paralysis. A few years ago I asked Betty if people living in the '30s and '40s were aware that FDR could not walk unaided. Her answer: "Everyone knew."

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10 MILES SQUARE

"...such district (not exceeding ten mile square)...[shall] become the seat of the government of the United States.
–THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES

Hoosier Daddy

What rising Democratic star Barack Obama can learn from an old lion of the GOP.

By Christina Larson

Many Americans would like to be president, but only the fewest have a presidential-grade mentor. For those in the market for a guru, however, the Senate has a particularly good track record. In the 1940s, Congressman Gerald Ford learned about Washington and foreign policy from "my hometown hero" Michigan senator Arthur Vandenberg. In the 1950s, freshman senator Lyndon Johnson became a "professional son" to Georgia senator Richard Russell. In the 1960s, Senate intern Bill Clinton learned from a figure he'd "admired all my life," Arkansas Democrat William Fulbright.

Unlike these past relationships, however, the most dynamic duo in Washington today crosses party lines. Old-school realist Richard Lugar, the five-term Republican senator from Indiana, has embraced new-school realist and rising star Barack Obama, the junior Democratic senator from Illinois. The relationship is admiring. "I very much feel like the novice and pupil," Obama has said of Lugar. And it's warm. Lugar praises Obama's "strong voice and creativity" and calls him "my good friend." In short, the two agree on much and seem to genuinely like each other. Rather unusual in hyper-partisan Washington, these days.

Sens. Richard Lugar (R-IN) and Barack Obama (D-IL) in Kiev in August 2005.

Art: Associated Press photographer Sergei Chuzavkov

Like most friendships inside the Beltway, this one involves some mix of affection and career advancement. But it is also built, rather charmingly, on

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shared wonkish interests. By most accounts, Obama and Lugar's working relationship began with nukes. On the campaign trail in 2004, Obama spoke passionately about the dangers of loose nukes and the legacy of the Nunn-Lugar nonproliferation program, a framework created by a 1991 law to provide the former Soviet republics assistance in securing and deactivating nuclear weapons. Lugar took note, as "nonproliferation" is about as common a campaign sound bite for aspiring senators as "exchange-rate policy" or "export-import bank oversight." Soon after Obama won the election, the two men exchanged phone calls. Lugar, who chairs the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, suggested that the younger senator aim for a seat on the committee; Obama did, successfully.

The two men grew closer in August of 2005, when Obama joined Lugar on a tour of Russia and Eastern Europe to inspect weapons facilities, a trip that Lugar makes annually. For the younger senator, it was a chance to see first-hand the situation that had long unsettled the older statesman. In Kiev, they visited a pathogen laboratory, an unsecured nondescript downtown building, where the senators were shown a storage unit resembling a mini-refrigerator that contained vast rows of test tubes. Some tubes held anthrax; others, the plague. As Obama has recounted the story, "At this point I turned around and said 'Hey, where's Lugar? Doesn't he want to see this?'" But the older senator was standing in the back of the room, nonchalantly. "Been there, done that," Lugar said.

The two men were also detained for several hours in the Russian town of Perm, when local border officials suddenly demanded to search the senators' plane. After some angry phone calls from Washington, the plane was released, but, Lugar noted, "it makes you wonder who really is running the country."

Most important, though, may have been the timing of the senators' visit to Ukraine and Azerbaijan. Russia had chosen that moment to escalate a dispute with Ukraine over national gas by cutting off the pipeline that supplies Russian gas to Ukraine and Germany, threatening the economy of much of Western Europe. Meanwhile Azerbaijan's economy was set to go on steroids with the completion of its own gas pipeline to the West. The trip focused Obama's attention on the tight link between energy resources and national security—a longtime concern of Lugar's.

Something else unfamiliar happened on the trip—or at least something that rarely happens in the United States: Lugar overshadowed Obama. In Russia, where Lugar has been a regular visitor for the past 15 years, the senior senator from Indiana received generous media coverage and attention from political leaders, while the junior senator from Illinois sometimes went unrecognized. "If anybody has ever accompanied Senator Lugar on a trip," Obama would later joke to an audience at the Council on Foreign Relations, "you know that he is a rock star wherever he goes."

After returning to Washington, Lugar and Obama co-sponsored legislation to update the Nunn-Lugar program. The resulting law, which expands the nonproliferation program for nuclear arms to conventional

THE WASHINGTON MONTHLY'S
Monthly Journalism Award

Jonathan D. Epstein and Rod Watson

The Buffalo News, June 19, 2006

Rent-to-own buys misery for the poor"

It's a cruel irony that being poor can be more expensive than being rich. One case in point is the "rent-to-own" business, which invites people without credit cards or savings to buy household appliances on monthly payment plans for hundreds of dollars more than the item's value. As Jonathan Epstein and Rod Watson explain in their comprehensive account of this predatory industry, people living paycheck to paycheck eventually wind up spending as much as $1,700 on a $430 refrigerator, or $2,000 on a washer-dryer that sells for $660 at Best Buy.

Most states have legislation regulating the rent-to-own business. But according to critics interviewed by Epstein and Watson, the laws are often "weak" and "written by the industry." In New York state, rent-to-own stores take advantage of a legal loophole that allows them to determine the cash value of an item, rather than using the prevailing price at traditional retailers. The industry is also lobbying for federal regulations that would overturn some of the stricter state laws. (It probably doesn't hurt that Richard Armey sits on the board of Rent-A-Center, a national chain).

The typical response of the rent-to-own industry is that customers at regular retail stores who buy goods on credit plans pay about the same amount, once you add the interest and finance fees. Epstein and Watson did the math and disagreed — the refrigerator was still around $900 cheaper on a credit plan.

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weapons and WMDs, is called the Lugar-Obama Act, a name that "virtually rolls off the tongue," in the approving words of Scripps-Howard columnist Martin Schram. This March, Lugar and Obama introduced the American Fuels Act of 2006, an ambitious bill that would drive investment in biomass ethanol. And, in late July, the two senators are slated to cosponsor a bill on raising automobile fuel-efficiency standards.

Of course, friendships across the Senate aisle aren't so unusual. (Ted Kennedy once composed a serenade for his teetotalling buddy Orrin Hatch: "Wherever I go/ I know Orrin goes/ no fits, no fights, no feuds, no egos/ amigos/ together.") But bipartisanship is uncommon in mentor relationships. One might expect Obama, for example, to sidle up to someone like John Kerry, or five-term Michigan Democrat Carl Levin. And Lugar might be expected to take a young Republican whippersnapper under his wing, both in the name of party loyalty and of molding Republicans of the future.

Still, if Obama wants to see any legislation with his name on it pass, then having a Republican teammate makes more sense. Unlike many Democrats in Congress, Lugar has the ability to get a few things done. And, if Lugar is looking to secure his legacy by passing on his moderate, substantive foreign-policy vision to someone who's open-minded, sensible, respectful, and destined for leadership, Obama's not a bad choice. To put it differently, what current Republican freshman would fit the bill?

Indeed, in a political atmosphere where conservatism increasingly appears to be leaving the realm of reason altogether, moderate Republican holdouts like Lugar begin to have more in common with characters across the aisle. While the GOP, led by the White House, has spent most of the decade trying to dismiss global warming as a liberal hoax, Lugar has since the late 1990s been calling for action on the problem and refers to the impasse over the issue as one that "sometimes leaves the science and becomes almost theological."

One reason Lugar can afford to speak his mind is that, at 74 years old, any ambitions for higher office are now behind him. In 1996, Lugar made a bid for the GOP presidential nomination that didn't go far, and he hasn't run since. Still, the past comes up once in a while. Recently, a Russian newspaper announcing Lugar's visit ran a picture from the 1996 campaign. According to *The Chicago Tribune*, the campaign photo prompted someone to ask Lugar if he would consider running for president again. The old lion shook his head and passed the torch. "That's for Barack," he said.

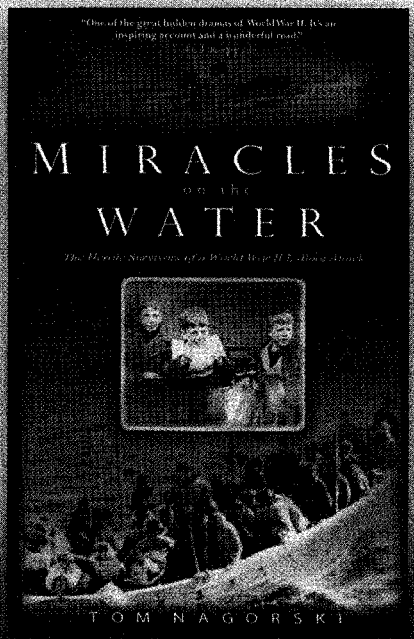
Christina Larson is the managing editor of *The Washington Monthly*.

"One of the great hidden dramas of World War II."
–Ted Koppel

An unforgettable story of children in wartime, of heroism at sea, and—above all—of courage and the power of the human spirit.

"Tom Nagorski scores a bull's-eye in his print debut with this riveting account."
–*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

"A warm, gripping, sensitive product of extraordinary research . . . It is more than a wonderful read. It is a paean to the human spirit."
–Warren Kimball,
Forged in War: Roosevelt, Churchill, and the Second World War



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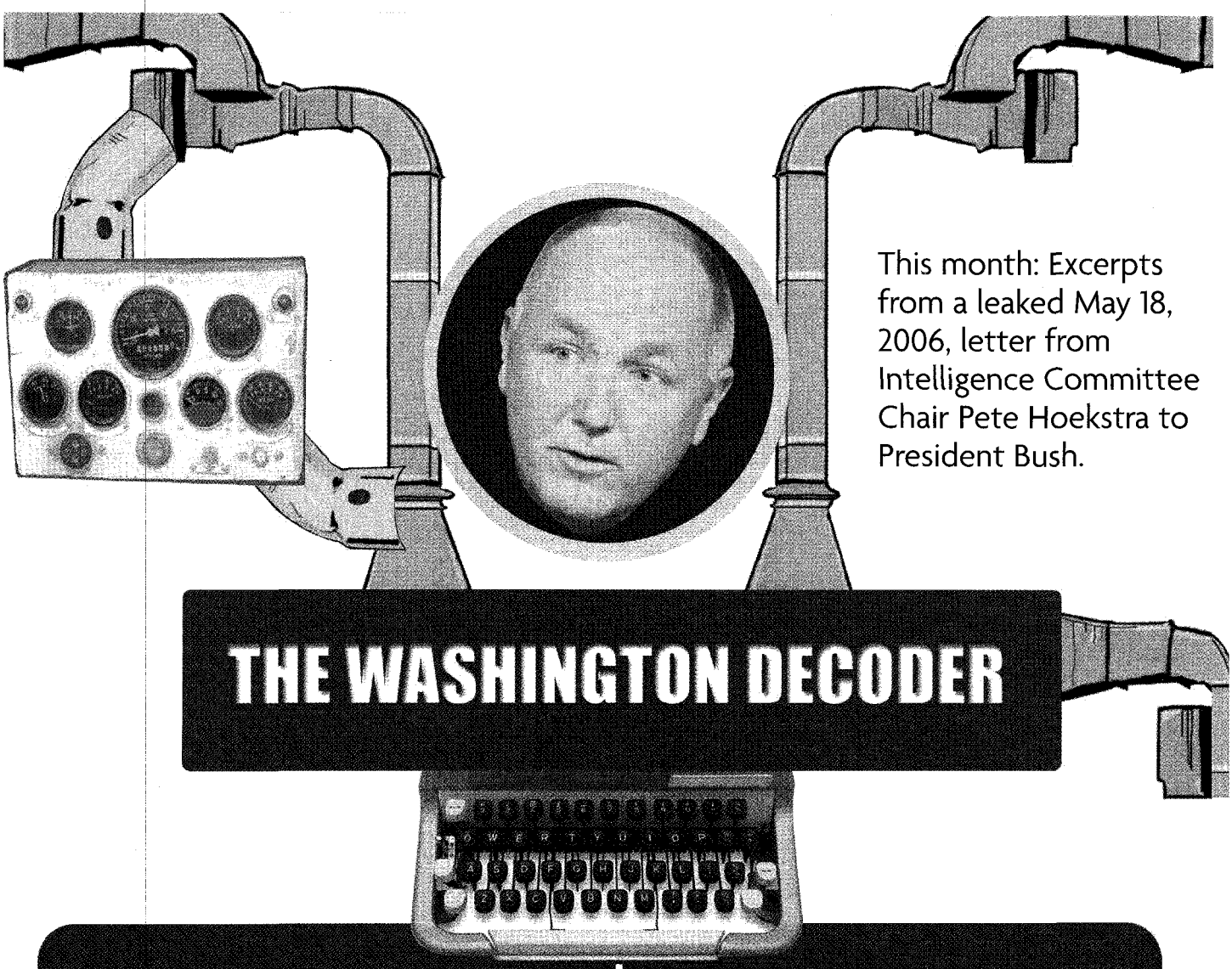

This month: Excerpts from a leaked May 18, 2006, letter from Intelligence Committee Chair Pete Hoekstra to President Bush.

THE WASHINGTON DECODER

Excerpts from Hoekstra Letter	Translation
Dear Mr. President...First, I am concerned that the nominations for Director and Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency signal a retreat from needed reforms of the Agency ...	First, I thought we had a plan to staff the CIA with rightwing shills. These choices suck.
...and I think it would be an understatement to say that I am disappointed that Congress was never consulted on either of these choices.	And you shafted us.
Collaboration is what got us successful intelligence reform. Why should we want to eschew such a process and relationship that proved so helpful?	But you're only shafting yourself.
[T]here was such hope for progress after 9/11 and the successful passage of the reform bill in December of 2004.	Remember? We were so set to shaft the CIA.
I have long been concerned that a strong and well-positioned group with the Agency intentionally undermined the Administration and its policies.	Then the CIA shafted us.
Everyday we suffer from the consequences of individuals promoting their personal agendas.	Everyday, we suffer from the consequences of individuals other than Pete Hoekstra promoting their personal agendas.
Regrettably, there are other issues that need to be discussed. What I've provided here are the most pressing.	You're shafting me so many ways I could fill a book. But I'll stop here, since you don't read those anyway.
Thank you for consideration of these items.	Go Cheney yourself.

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A Higher Power

James Baker puts Bush's Iraq policy into rehab.

By Robert Dreyfuss

Amid the highly charged political infighting in Washington over what to do in Iraq, you might be excused for not noticing that a bipartisan commission quietly started work last spring with a mandate to help the Bush administration rethink its policy toward the war. Of course, anything labeled "bipartisan commission" seems almost guaranteed to be ignored by a highly partisan White House that is notoriously hostile to outside advice and famously devoted to "staying the course." But what makes this particular commission hard to dismiss is that it is led by perhaps the one man who might be able to break through the tight phalanx of senior officials who advise the president and filter his information. That person is the former secretary of state, Republican insider, and consigliere of the Bush family, James A. Baker III.

Since March, Baker, backed by a team of experienced national-security hands, has been busily at work trying to devise a fresh set of policies to help the president chart a new course in—or, perhaps, to get the hell out of—Iraq. But as with all things involving James Baker, there's a deeper political agenda at work as well. "Baker is primarily motivated by his desire to avoid a war at home—that things will fall apart not on the battlefield but at home. So he wants a ceasefire in American politics," a member of one of the commission's working groups told me. Specifically, he said, if the Democrats win back one or both houses of Congress in November, they would unleash a series of investigative hearings on Iraq, the war on terrorism, and civil liberties that could fatally weaken the administration and remove the last props of political support for the war, setting the stage for a potential Republican electoral disaster in 2008. "I guess there are people in the [Republican] party, on the Hill and in the White House, who see a political train wreck coming, and they've called in Baker to try to reroute the train."

The fact that Baker is involved has sent the Washington rumor mill buzzing with the theory that the commission is really a Trojan Horse for the views of Baker's friend and former boss, George H.W. Bush. It has been widely speculated that the former president never agreed with his son's decision to invade Iraq, and the son appears to have repaid that perceived dissent by largely refusing to reach out to his father for advice on national security, despite the elder Bush's knowledge and experience. In any case, for reasons that may be Oedipal or that may have to do with neoconservatives' disdain for realists associated with Bush 41, or both, Bush 43 has so far kept the 41 circle at arm's length—including Baker; his confrere Brent Scowcroft; and even, during his ill-fated tenure as secretary of state, Colin Powell. But with the situation in Iraq sliding towards irretrievable chaos, a moment of receptivity may have arrived.

It's hard to know what the commission is really up to because its inner workings are nearly as secretive as those of the White House. Baker has imposed an ironclad gag order on all of its participants. The 60 people involved in the effort have been instructed, in the strongest of terms, not to comment to reporters on the task force's work. Every one of the participants I spoke to flatly refused to comment for the record, and several did not want to talk even off the record. Some were palpably nervous. "We're not allowed to talk about it," said one person involved. "We get about every month a warning: 'Do not discuss in any context the substance of what is happening in this group.' You know how bad it is? Initially they wanted us to end all of our contacts with the media, make no statements, write no op-eds— in other words, become monks. Then they realized, how can you take the entire community of Iraq experts in the United States and have them all stop talking?"

Baker's commission—officially called the Iraq Study Group—was created in March by Congress at the instigation of Rep. Frank Wolf, a Virginia Republican. After his third trip to Iraq last year, Wolf started contacting members of Congress on both sides of the aisle, urging the creation of a high-powered, private task force to take a fresh look at the mess in Iraq. "If you had a very serious illness ... and you weren't completely comfortable that everything was going the way you hoped, you'd certainly want to get a second opinion," Wolf told me. At least 30 members of Congress supported the idea, including Rep. Christopher Shays (R-Conn.) and Sen. Joseph Biden (D-Del.). According to participants in the task force, a key silent partner with Wolf in putting it together was his Virginia Republican colleague, Sen. John Warner, the chairman of the powerful Senate Armed Services committee.

Wolf's motivation in creating the Iraq Study Group seems to be genuine concern that the war isn't going well and that pub-

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Robert Dreyfuss covers national security for *Rolling Stone* and is the author of *Devil's Game: How the U.S. Helped Unleash Fundamentalist Islam.*

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lic support for it is evaporating. During his visit to Iraq, where he spent hours with U.S. military officers in the field, Wolf says that his eyes were opened. "Some of the things that were told to me, I had never seen before: the destabilization of the region," Wolf told me. "Some of the scenarios that were given to me [included] the overthrow of the Saudi government, [along with both] the Jordanian government and the Egyptian government.... So I just felt, let's take another look. And no one should be afraid of doing it."

But some people were afraid, above all in the administration. "Reaction was mixed," Wolf told me. "Initially, there was not a lot of support for the idea." Backed by congressional heavyweights, including Warner, Wolf met privately with Cheney, Rice, Rumsfeld, and others in the administration. His message? "If you're so confident it's going well, why are you so afraid for someone else to take a look at it?" Wolf, as the chairman of the appropriations subcommittee that funds the State Department, had clear leverage with Rice. Not surprisingly, according to an aide to Wolf, the vice president was the most resistant to the idea. But, reluctantly or not, perhaps unwilling to challenge an idea with strong support from House and Senate Republicans, Bush and Cheney signed off on the idea. "Gradually," Wolf told me, "they came to see the merit of it." In June, President Bush himself met briefly with the task force. "Iraq is a complex situation," Bush told them. "And the fact that you are all willing to lend your expertise to help chart the way forward means a lot."

The president may have had another political motive for giving his blessing to the endeavor. If—and it's a very big if—Baker can forge a consensus plan on what to do about Iraq among the bigwigs on his commission, many of them leading foreign-policy figures in the Democratic Party, then the 2008 Democratic presidential nominee—whoever he (or she) is—will have a hard time dismissing the plan. And if the GOP nominee also embraces the plan, then the Iraq war would largely be off the table as a defining issue of the 2008 race—a potentially huge advantage for Republicans.

Besides Baker, the bipartisan task force is co-chaired by former congressman Lee H. Hamilton, the Indiana Democrat and foreign-policy wise man. Working with a quartet of think tanks—the U.S. Institute of Peace, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the Center for the Study of the Presidency, and the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy—Baker and Hamilton recruited a star-studded task force, evenly split between Republicans and Democrats. The Republicans include Robert M. Gates, the former CIA director; Sandra Day O'Connor, the retired Justice; Alan Simpson, the former Wyoming senator; and Edwin Meese III, attorney general under President Reagan. The Democrats are William Perry, President Clinton's secretary of defense; Charles Robb, the former Virginia senator; Leon Panetta, Clinton's chief of staff; and Vernon Jordan, the lawyer and Friend of Bill.

Since April, operating almost entirely under the radar, the task force has spawned four working groups, recruiting scores of U.S. experts on Iraq and the Middle East to look at military and security issues, Iraqi politics, reconstruction, and the regional and strategic environment surrounding the war. Among the participants in these working groups are former ambassadors and State Department officials, intelligence officers from the CIA and other parts of the U.S. intelligence community, and think-tank denizens from the RAND Corporation, the Nixon Center, the Henry L. Stimson Center, the Brookings Institution, the American Enterprise Institute, the Middle East Institute, the Council on Foreign Relations, and others, along with a panel of retired military officers: three army generals, an air-force general, and an admiral.

But according to all accounts, the Iraq Study Group is Baker's show, with the assembled cast of characters there to give Baker the bipartisan, protective coloration he needs. "Jim Baker is the gatekeeper," one task-force participant told me, insisting on anonymity. "He's by far the most dynamic, and everyone else is intimidated by him." And Baker is keeping his cards very close to his chest. "He's very secretive, he keeps his distance, and he compartmentalizes everything, which is not a bad way to organize a political conspiracy," says another member of one of the working groups.

Several of those involved in the task force point out that Baker is perfect for the job. "First of all, he's close to Bush 41," one of them told me. "Second, Bush 43 owes his presidency to Jim Baker because of the skullduggery in Florida in 2000. And Baker is the consummate consigliere. He's utterly ruthless and very effective at what he does. When they [the Bushes] get into an emergency, they call Baker."

The emergency, in this case, is the collapse of public support for the war in Iraq, the president's catastrophic fall in the polls, the growing calls on the left for a pullout of U.S. forces, and the concern at the Joint Chiefs of Staff about the Pentagon's inability to sustain the presence of 127,000 U.S. troops in Iraq indefinitely. "The American people will not allow the United States to stay much longer," a participant in one of the working groups told me. "They're going to demand a phased withdrawal."

Partly because of his penchant for secrecy, no one knows Baker's views on the war, and since 2003 Baker has said little. It is widely believed, however, that Baker is part of the realist-minded, internationalist wing of the Republican Party, whose semi-official spokesman is Scowcroft, Bush 41's national-security adviser. At the time that the task force began its work, in April, *The New York Times* reported that the idea had the support of President Bush's father. "Baker has had some serious doubts about the war and about the nature of our commitment," Edward S. Walker Jr., the former assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs, who is president of the Middle East Institute, told me. "He seems to be reflective of the part of the Republican Party tied to Scowcroft. And it's natural to think that the whole group around George H.W. Bush is involved in this with Baker."

The relentlessly centrist nature of the Iraq Study Group has some, especially among the neoconservative cheerleaders for the war, worried. "You'll notice, of course, that there are no neocons on the task force," said a member of one of the working groups. Here and there, scattered among the members of the working groups, are a handful of hard-line neocons, among them Clifford May, president of the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, and Reuel Marc Gerecht, a former CIA Middle East hand who is a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. But they are vastly outnumbered by the moderates and centrists. In assembling the task force, Wolf,

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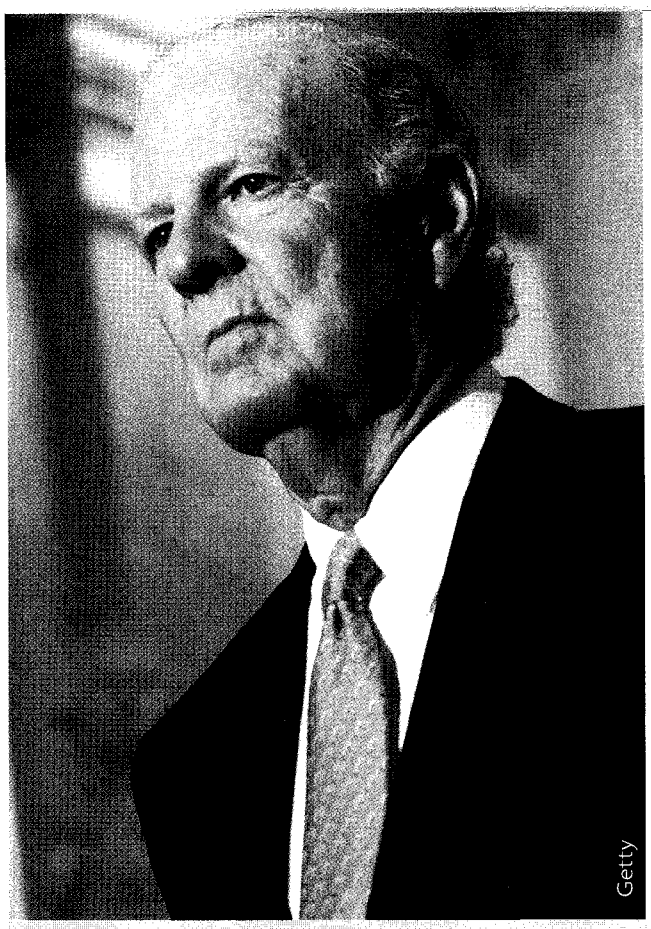
Baker and Hamilton were careful to avoid the neocons. "If you'd put [Douglas] Feith on it, people would say, 'These are the guys who got us in there in the first place,'" said a Wolf aide. Thomas Neumann, executive director of the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs and a neoconservative, is concerned that Baker will steer the group toward an Iraq exit. "Baker's a lawyer," he told me. "He'll probably come up with some sort of position about getting an international consensus on Iraq."



James A. Baker III

Few disagree with the idea that if the president's mind can be changed on Iraq, Baker is the one to do it. Lawrence Korb, a former Pentagon official, is a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress, where he co-authored "Strategic Redeployment: A Progressive Plan for Iraq," a paper that calls for the near-total withdrawal of U.S. troops by the end of 2007. Korb's plan might attract centrist Democrats and some Republicans who see it as a more diplomatically worded version of Rep. John Murtha's out-now position, and although Korb doesn't know if Baker will gravitate toward something like his redeployment plan, he says that at least Baker is the right person. "If anyone can do it, Baker can," he told me. "I think that Baker has the wherewithal to talk to the president." And tell him what? "The present course is unsustainable."

Unsustainable, yes. But does that mean getting out? Wolf, for one, insists that the war in Iraq is winnable, and that the costs to the United States of failure in Iraq would be enormous. In a *Washington Post* op-ed last September, Wolf referred to the "potentially cataclysmic consequences of walking away from Iraq before the job is done." And in his remarks at the news conference at the task force's creation, Wolf added: "Failure in Iraq would have devastating regional consequences, a direct impact on American national security, and perpetuation of the perception among reformers in the region that America is a fair-weather friend, not to be depended on."

But the choice facing the task force—and, of course, the administration as well—is nonetheless bleak: Is there really a true middle ground between "staying the course" and "getting out"? By staying the course, the president means: battle the insurgency, build up Iraq's army and police, and strengthen the government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki until Iraq is stable and secure. Perhaps Baker's task force will fiddle with that, supporting the basic notion of staying the course but adjusting this or that part of the strategy. But it's hard to see what those adjustments might be, since so far no one (including many experts in and outside the task force) has figured out a way of solving the Rubik's Cube that is Iraq. No team of experts, even those on the Iraq Study Group, is likely to come up with a silver bullet that can defeat the Sunni insurgents, get the religious Shiites to disarm the militia forces, block the Kurds from trying to seize Kirkuk and Iraq's northern oil fields, rebuild Iraq's shattered infrastructure, and prevent civil war. In the end, the choices are: Either we stay and fight, whatever the cost in lives and in money—or we set a date for withdrawal, start an orderly redeployment, and do what we can to encourage Iraq, its neighbors, the Arab League, and the United Nations to step in.

To some, it's unlikely that Baker will adopt anything resembling a plan that embodies a wholesale rejection of the Bush administration's policy, though it isn't impossible. Still, there is an outside chance, say observers of the task force, that Baker will come up with a report that uses diplomatic weasel-words, giving lip service to the idea of an American "victory" in Iraq but endorsing redeployment. "If Baker comes out with a report that basically says, if you read between the lines, we need to get out, that buys into the fundamental presumption of the redeployment crowd—the redeployment crowd is basically saying that staying there is worse than getting out—if he comes up in that consensus, that would be remarkable," says Ivo Daalder of the Brookings Institution. "It would be earth-shattering."

In any case, the Iraq Study Group won't issue its report until some time early in 2007. In a recent speech, according to a member of the task force, Baker said that to do something before the November 2006 elections would inevitably politicize the report, something that Baker desperately wants to avoid.

But with each passing day, the country is closer to the train wreck that Baker and others are said to fear. In the end, avoiding it might ride on the ability of Jim Baker to persuade the president that it's time to declare victory and exit.

"The object of our policy has to be to get our little white asses out of there as soon as possible," another working-group participant told me. To do that, he said, Baker must confront the president "like the way a family confronts an alcoholic. You bring everyone in, and you say, 'Look, my friend, it's time to change.'" ♦

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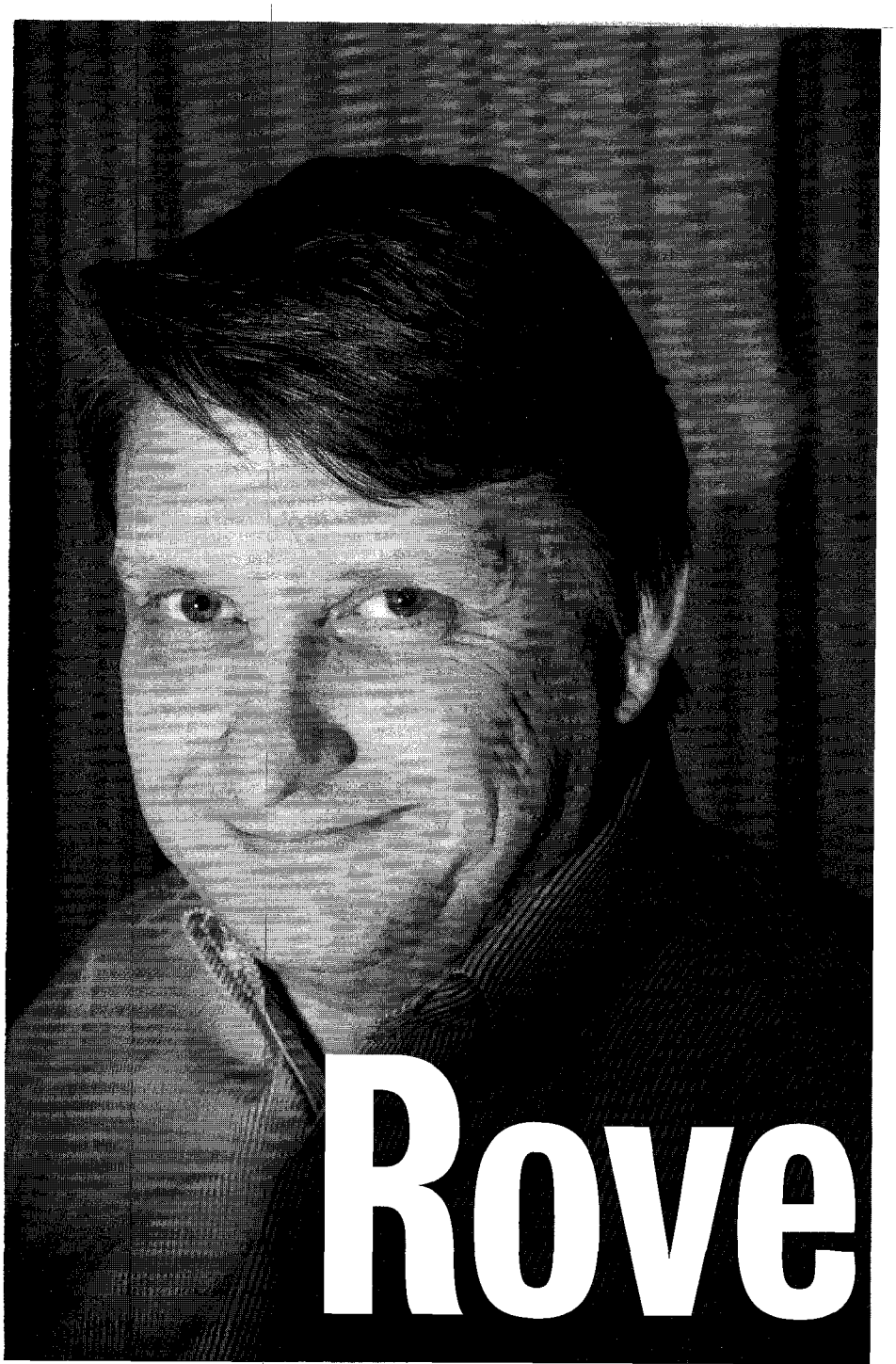

Dick Wadhams photographed on May 22, 2006 by Sam Kittner for The Washington Monthly.

Rove 2.0

Dick Wadhams is the next Republican maestro of cutthroat campaigning. Can Democrats figure out how to stop him?

By Rebecca Sinderbrand

This spring, former combat Marine, one-time Reagan Navy secretary, and first-time candidate James Webb surprised political experts by entering the Democratic Senate primary in Virginia at the last minute—and winning. Three days later, Webb shocked Washington again by pulling within five points of the heavy-spending incumbent, Republican George Allen, despite a cash crunch that had kept Webb off the air for weeks. Legendary Virginia pundit Larry Sabato gave an ominous reading of the situation: The state's voters didn't yet know much about Webb, so the close numbers reflected "a judgment on George Allen." Damaging headlines loomed.

But a funny thing happened on the way to the front page. The poll results had barely gone public before Allen's chief campaign strategist, Dick Wadhams, went on the offensive. Sabato was a "biased" source, Wadhams sniffed to reporters from the Newport News, Va.-based *Daily Press*, and *The Wall Street Journal* poll carried out by establishment pollster John Zogby was "a joke." Moreover, said Wadhams, Zogby had "long ago been discredited."

A livid Zogby took the bait. "Frankly, I have never heard of Dick Wadhams and I may never hear from him again since he obviously is delusional," the pollster sputtered in a letter to the Virginia paper. "The race is close, and... Wadhams is obviously not up to the task."

Actually, thanks to Zogby's angry reaction, Wadhams had

Rebecca Sinderbrand is an editor of *The Washington Monthly*.

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just earned his paycheck. Bloggers and political observers zeroed in on the showdown—particularly the scorn aimed at Sabato, a Virginia institution with a reputation for nonpartisanship. ("CHARLOTTESVILLE BRAWL" screamed one headline.) Obscured by the theatrics were the implications of the poll itself: why was Allen, a one-time shoo-in for reelection and a purported leader in the 2008 presidential pack, polling miserably against an almost unknown opponent? What's more, Sabato and Zogby had now been cast, however unwillingly, into partisan roles. Forget politics as bloodsport; this was negative campaigning raised to a fine art.

To describe Wadhams, a 50-year-old Colorado native, as indispensable to Allen's political future is almost to understate his importance. Democrats discuss Wadhams in fatalistic tones, with a kind of grudging respect; Republicans wax downright reverent. Both sides view him as Karl Rove's heir-apparent. Still, the race in Virginia is as crucial for him as it is for George Allen. If Wadhams steers Allen to victory, he'll probably manage Allen's national campaign in 2008, effectively assuming the Turd Blossom's mantle. But if Jim Webb manages to defeat Allen, a Republican incumbent and top-tier presidential prospect, it would mean more than the death of the senator's presidential hopes. It would mean that Democrats may have finally found the political kryptonite they need to counter the winning strategy that GOP superhero consultants, like Wadhams, have used to carry their party to dominance.

'Loser, Fraud, Dirty'

The celebrity Republican campaign manager with a taste for the jugular has become an icon of modern politics. Most belonged to the same generation of cutthroat Watergate-era College Republicans. The first luminary, Lee Atwater, grabbed a foothold in campaign history during a successful 1980 congressional race during which he anonymously told reporters his candidate's Democratic opponent had been treated for mental illness by being "hooked up to jumper cables." He sealed his fame masterminding George H.W. Bush's 1988 victory over Michael Dukakis, aided by the infamous Willie Horton ads. After Atwater succumbed to brain cancer 15 years ago, Karl Rove became the leading avatar of the brutal style he'd pioneered.

Theirs has always been a simple formula: all it takes is a few socially divisive wedge issues and the ability to frame opponents' strengths as weaknesses. Rove added his own innovations: aggressive deployment of K Street cash and sophisticated demographic targeting—the latter skill gleaned from his days in the direct-mail business. Their trademark style, which has come to dominate GOP politics, is defined by the masterfully delivered below-the-belt hit.

Wadhams is generally acknowledged to have taken such low blows to new heights, combining blistering verbal assaults, nasty wedge issues, and general loud-mouthing in an astonishingly effective manner. Wadhams "represents the next stage," says Colorado pollster Floyd Ciruli: "Rove understood direct mail, the strategic theory for that moment. Wadhams has those talents, but also he is the message master who understood what new technology means to that approach before almost anyone else." In 2004, when Wadhams was helping Republican John Thune to unseat South Dakota Democrat and Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle, every weapon in the arsenal was unfurled. There were damaging storylines: Daschle was a "pathological liar," a farm-boy turned effete Michael Moore groupie who had reliably "emboldened Saddam Hussein." There was base-riling: At many of the state's churches, packages arrived filled with bumper stickers carrying the slogan "Vote Daschle, Vote for Sodomy." (Wadhams was careful to distance himself personally from those deliveries—but happy to discuss them.) And there was Wadhams as one-man campaign wrecking ball: When Daschle communications director Dan Pfeiffer tried to squeeze in a media hit after an election-related courthouse faceoff, Wadhams stood just off-camera bellowing "Bullshit! Bullshit!" like an outraged baseball fan cat-calling a major-league ump.

Wadhams's most effective innovations involved media manipulation. Under his leadership, the campaign secretly paid two conservative South Dakota bloggers who spent election season blasting the state's major paper, the *Sioux Falls Argus-Leader*, for supposed pro-Daschle bias. The paper's dazed editors later admitted the mau-mauing influenced their campaign coverage. Thune beat Daschle by fewer than 4,000 votes.

That Wadhams would think to co-opt a pair of bloggers is testament to his understanding of the news business, a savvy that sets him apart from nearly all his peers. Wadhams spends half his time flooding the zone with slash-and-burn press releases—dozens a week—and most of the rest chatting up reporters eager to discuss politics, not policy. The press releases create a sense of urgency, and, through sheer volume, manufacture the feeling of a rapidly developing story. The phone calls—at the height of campaign season, local journalists describe getting up to half a dozen a day—both flatter and intimidate. (The mercurial Wadhams can shift from amiable to antagonistic in an instant.)

Where Atwater and Rove often preferred to cloak their animus in off-the-record chats and third-party actors, Wadhams seeks out the spotlight. His public pronouncements are ubiquitous and brutal, and he seems to revel in the bloodletting. When Montana Republican Conrad Burns was running for reelection to the U.S. Senate and tanked in a debate with Democratic challenger Brian Schweitzer, Wadhams told an AP scribe that Schweitzer had performed like a "smart-ass thug." Media coverage of the debate was dominated by the comment, not Burns's lackluster showing. (Schweitzer, who lost narrowly, was later elected governor.) When Republican senator Wayne Allard of Colorado faced a challenge from Democrat Tom Strickland, Wadhams described Strickland as an untrustworthy "lawyer-lobbyist," and "the dirtiest candidate in America." (One columnist marveled, "[W]ho else [but Wadhams] can say 'lawyer-lobbyist' 50 times an hour and, each time, make it sound exactly like 'murderer-rapist'?") When Strickland arranged a climb to the top of Grays Peak at sunrise to showcase his environmental credentials, Wadhams made sure a team of catcalling Allard staffers was waiting for him at the summit. Twice, Strickland faced off against Allard and Wadhams; both times, he lost.

So far, such tactics have earned Wadhams an impressive record: he's suffered only one loss in nearly three decades of campaign management. (The defeat came in 1992 when Colorado Republican Terry Considine lost his Senate race to

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then-Democrat Ben Nighthorse Campbell.) "Going negative gets a bad rap," Wadhams told me. "Voters have to make a choice. You need to show how the candidates differ from each other. That's how democracy works, so that's how I work." (He's not alone on the Allen campaign: longtime Republican media operative Chris LaCivita, a former Marine who's known Webb for years, spent 2004 advising Swiftboat Veterans for Truth. Now, he's landed a spot working under Wadhams.)

During one particularly nasty race, *Rocky Mountain News* columnist Mike Littwin decided he'd had enough. "This is politics by invective—loser, fraud, dirty," he sputtered. "I asked [Dick] Wadhams where was the line you didn't cross. He said it was up to the voters to determine." In other words, democracy means never having to say you're sorry.

A real challenge

As midterms approach, and Democrats become increasingly optimistic, it's easy to forget just how unified and unstoppable the Bush-led Republican juggernaut seemed as little as a year ago. Nobody embodied that aura of inevitability quite like George Allen. In 2005, top Republican officials and funders considered Allen to be the most likely presidential frontrunner for 2008. Not only was Allen riding high in his home state, he was fresh off a highly successful stint as chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Committee. Under his leadership, the party had picked up several seats, including Tom Daschle's. He lacked the liabilities of other candidates: John McCain's reformism, Mitt Romney's Mormonism, Rudy Giuliani's social liberalism. Allen was a W redux—folksy, fratty, base-pleasing, and blessed (or cursed) with the name of a famous father (the football legend who coached the Los Angeles Rams and Virginia's beloved Washington Redskins). When Wadhams signed on to Allen's team, it was viewed as yet another sign of the senator's 2008 credibility. The senator, it was said, had won the "Wadhams primary."

But the party's luck changed, and Allen's fortunes shifted with it. As Iraq degenerated, New Orleans flooded, and the Medicare prescription-drug plan spread disarray among seniors, declarations of unqualified support for President Bush stopped looking so appealing. Allen's overwhelmingly pro-administration voting record (he voted in favor of presidential policies 97 percent of the time) morphed from a selling point to a vulnerability. In Virginia, the senator's approval ratings hovered around the 50-percent mark, the traditional danger zone for any incumbent trying to hold on to his seat.

To make matters worse, the senator drew an unexpectedly strong Democratic challenger in Webb, a one-time Allen supporter turned anti-Iraq war Democrat. As a social moderate, a decorated Vietnam veteran, and one-time member of the Reagan White House, Webb threatened Allen on a host of fronts. Suddenly, what looked like a cakewalk to re-election was shaping up to be the most hotly-covered Senate race since Hillary Clinton's inaugural run in New York.

I met Wadhams a few days before Webb wrapped up the nomination, just after a damaging *New Republic* profile of Allen hit the stands. Ryan Lizza's cover story focused on a number of unsettling Allen quirks, including his semi-abusive adolescent relationship with his siblings, and his unlikely embrace, as a born-and-bred Californian, of Confederate icons and culture—including a noose he once hung from a ficus tree in his office (his explanation—that the offending item was merely part of a Western memorabilia collection—didn't reduce the cringe factor). The Allen bandwagon had hit a roadblock on the way to the White House; suddenly, his team was feeling a lot less secure, and it showed. Wadhams veered between soft-spoken affability, and a prickly, defensive denial. Obvious questions—like whether the president's anemic approval ratings could prove a drag on Allen's own—turned him steely, and visibly tense.

We settled down in one of the half-furnished rooms in Allen's new campaign headquarters, a suite in a gleaming building just off an I-395 exit ramp in Arlington. Leaning forward in his chair, a grinning Wadhams dismissed the negative press and insisted things were right where he wanted them to be. "This is the kind of race I like, a real challenge," he said. "You get to point out the... the *contrast* between the candidates." His unapologetic campaign credo, he added, is "always get on the offensive, always stay on the offensive."

The battle began early for Dick Wadhams. As a Colorado teenager from a politically uninvolved family, he fell hard for Richard Nixon—but it was a solitary crush; he was, he insists, the only Nixon fan in his high school. Starting off as a 19-year-old GOP county chairman in the wasteland of post-Watergate Republican politics, Wadhams subsidized his university studies and political career with money from part-time work at a mortuary. After climbing on board Colorado Republican Bill Armstrong's successful Senate bid in 1978, Wadhams spent the next decade working for Armstrong and his successor, and fighting his way to the top of the political food chain.

Over the years, Wadhams's obsession with trail life has only deepened. His wife Susan, a former campaign staffer, died of cancer five years ago. Since then, Wadhams has been lured ever farther afield from his home state, living life from race to race. He's spent the past year in Washington but doesn't have his own apartment yet; instead, he stays with friends not far from Allen campaign headquarters. "I don't really go for hobbies," he says, impatiently. "I just like doing my job."

Risky game

"George Allen is at the most vulnerable moment of his career," says Larry Sabato. "[T]his just isn't the same state it used to be." As its ever-expanding northern Virginia suburbs fill up with transplants from Chicago, Boston, California, and New Delhi, the state's politics are edging away from their Old South roots. "Virginia is evolving into the next big swing state," says Sabato.

Perhaps nowhere in the state is this kind of change more dramatic than in Fredericksburg, located midway between Washington, D.C. and Richmond. Once rural and overwhelmingly Republican, the Fredericksburg area now forms the de-facto southern extreme of the D.C. suburbs. The region is the state's fastest-growing—over the past decade-and-a-half, the area's population has surged by an astounding 70 percent. Fredericksburg is the sort of Republican stronghold that Allen doesn't just need to win; he needs to win overwhelmingly.

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The small-town feel hasn't disappeared just yet; Fredericksburg on the Fourth of July looked like it had been airlifted straight out of 1962. The same Impalas and mile-wide Buicks lined the streets; Ray Charles and Patsy Cline provided the soundtrack. Just after the Rotary Club announced the winner of the annual chili cook-off, I headed over to the small corner of Caroline Street, on the edge of the Rappahannock River, where Allen and Webb supporters were angling for voter attention just a few feet from each other.

Allen retains an edge among longtime residents, a staunchly conservative crowd; it's the newcomers who pose the biggest challenge. Bert De Vore, a retired textbook salesman who moved to Fredericksburg six years ago, admitted that the Iraq war had probably cost George Allen his support. "We did our part," he said. "Poor guys, it's time to bring them home now. We need a senator who understands that." Lt. Col. Susan Schaffer, a career Air Force lawyer and Reagan voter, stood halfway between the two groups as she described how her political views had shifted since she joined the military legal team assigned to defend Guantanamo prisoners. "It's been a real eye-opener—you know, seeing how the law is swayed by politics," she said softly, in a voice that still carried traces of her Midwestern roots. "Now I know how things really work. It changes how you look at everything in our system." When she finally headed back towards the rest of the fair, the Spotsylvania County resident was sporting a newly-acquired Webb for Senate sticker.

Just like his boss, Dick Wadhams is facing a make-or-break race. He's almost exactly where Karl Rove was six years ago: a middle-aged operative who's spent years toiling in state races. Like Rove, Wadhams has joined up with a well-funded figure with regular-guy appeal and more than a touch of bravado. Like Rove, his ascent is threatened by a highly-decorated veteran and media darling who dazzles moderates and independents (for Rove, McCain; for Wadhams, longtime McCain pal Webb). But unlike 2000, his opponents have spent the past few years figuring out just how to fight back.

Webb's campaign strategy is largely handled by two Dixie-born consultants, Steve Jarding and Dave "Mudcat" Saunders. The combative Southerners—who literally wrote the book (*Foxes in the Henhouse*) on how Democrats can win south of the Mason-Dixon—have developed their own strategy for dealing with the Rovian brand of attack politics. Like that other Southern Democratic duo, James Carville and Paul Begala, Jarding and Saunders believe in hitting back hard and fast.

A few days after the Zogby scrap, Wadhams's team seized on Webb's lack of support for the flag-burning amendment then before the Senate, depicting the challenger as an acolyte of "Kerry, Kennedy and Schumer." For Jarding and Saunders, it was just the opening they'd been waiting for. Within minutes, a searing 695-word response hit the inbox of every reporter in the state. "While Jim Webb and others of George Felix Allen Jr.'s generation were fighting for our freedoms and for our symbols of freedom in Vietnam, George Felix Allen Jr. was playing cowboy at a dude ranch in Nevada," read the release. "People who live in glass dude ranches should not question the patriotism of real soldiers who fought and bled for this country on a real battlefield." The war-room response managed to be speedy, over-the-top, and highly quotable. Journalists swooned. "[I]f there was any doubt about how Webb was going to run his campaign, they were destroyed in one thermonuclear e-mail," noted the *Daily Press* in an approving editorial. Better still for the Webb team, a press release from the Allen campaign showing a significant lead for Allen in a SurveyUSA poll was largely buried by coverage of the patriotism showdown.

> Where Atwater and Rove often preferred to cloak their animus in off-the-record chats and third-party actors, Wadhams seeks out the spotlight. His public pronouncements are ubiquitous and brutal, and he seems to revel in the bloodletting.

"Wadhams thinks he's doing us damage," a gleeful Jarding boasted to me the next day, "but it's like he's poking holes in his own boat." The Webb campaign accused the Allen team of a Swiftboat vets-style assault, which Jarding says prompted a healthy cash infusion from donors eager to avenge John Kerry and Max Cleland. It's a risky game, admit Democrats; the nasty back-and-forth could depress turnout, which generally translates into a Republican electoral advantage. But in their view, Jim Webb is helping to chart the party's course across traditionally deadly campaign terrain. In this brave new world, the GOP's killer campaign team itself becomes the target.

Webb still has an uphill battle. As of mid-July, Allen, who hasn't lose a race in nearly a quarter-century, still retained a double-digit lead in some polls, and millions more than his cash-poor opponent. To keep his Oval Office dreams alive, he doesn't have to win in November by much. He just has to win. Whether he does or not may determine more than the likely frontrunner in the '08 GOP primaries. An Allen victory means that the slash-and-burn style mastered by Atwater, dominated by Rove, and advanced by Wadhams is still an unstoppable force. A loss may mean that Democrats, finally, may have figured out a way to beat it. ♦

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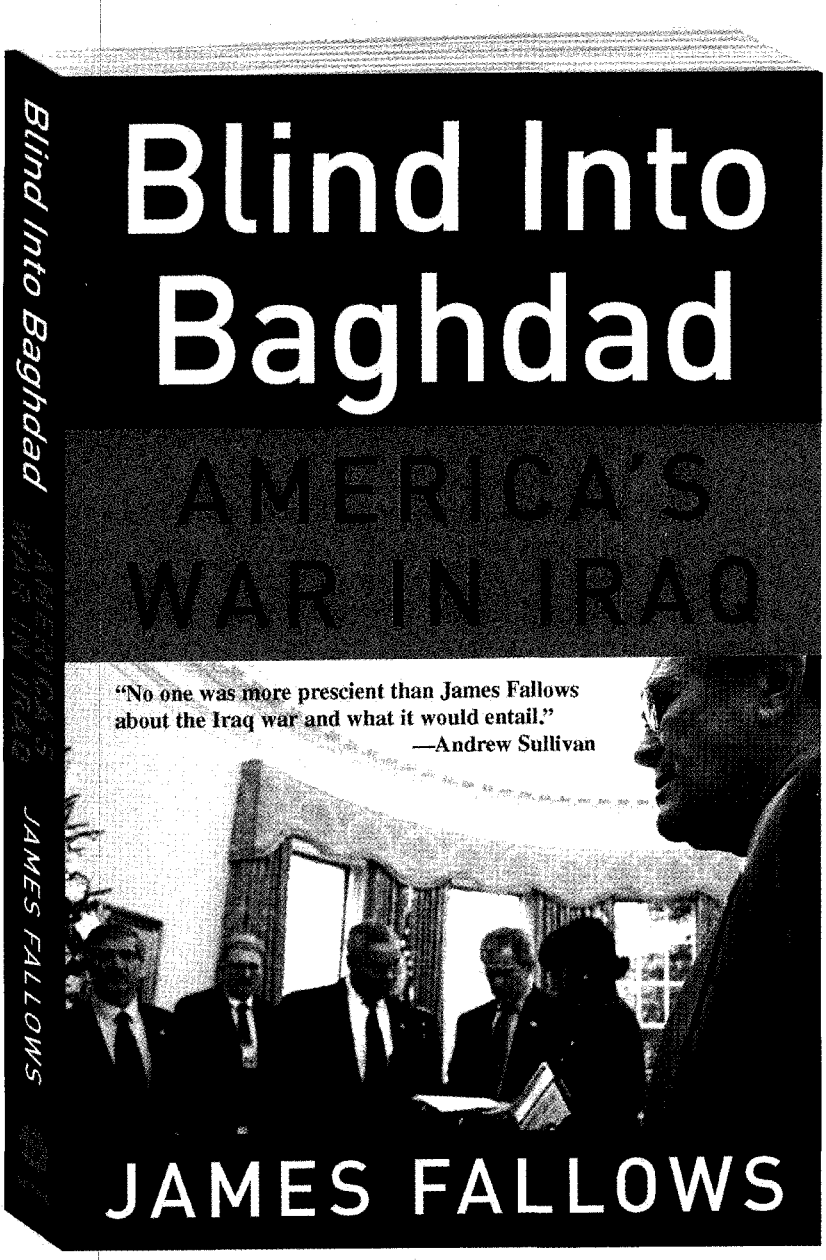
"No one was more prescient than James Fallows about the Iraq war and what it would entail." —ANDREW SULLIVAN

A collection of groundbreaking articles by award-winning journalist James Fallows



"[The] articles on Iraq were among the most brilliant and important works American journalism has ever produced. They hit the trifecta—in each the reporting, thinking, and writing were exemplary."
—*The New Republic*

"James Fallows has made invaluable contributions to our knowledge of the planning and conduct of the war in Iraq. This is essential reading for anyone who wishes to understand what went wrong."
—**GENERAL ANTHONY ZINNI (ret.), U.S. Marine Corps**

"The Iraq imbroglio has produced some amazing and, for war supporters, painful essays. . . . "Blind Into Baghdad". . . show[s] that most of what happened in postwar Iraq was predicted prewar by government analysts. It's just that their reports were suppressed or ignored by people making the decisions."
—**DAVID BROOKS,** *The New York Times*

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The Washington Monthly's

Annual College Guide

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By the Editors

A year ago, we decided we'd had enough of laying into *U.S. News & World Report* for shortcomings in its college guide. If we were so smart, maybe we should produce a college guide of our own. So we did. (We're that smart.) We've produced a second guide this year—our rankings for national universities and liberal arts colleges begin on page 30—and it's fair to ask: Is our guide better than that of *U.S. News*?

Well, it's certainly different. *U.S. News* aims to provide readers with a yardstick by which to judge the "best" schools, ranked according to academic excellence. Now, we happen to think *U.S. News* and similar guides do a lousy job of actually measuring academic excellence (see "Is Our Students Learning?" page 26). But the aim of such guides is a perfectly worthy one. Higher education is a huge investment, and parents and students have a right to know whether their hard-earned tuition dollars will be well spent.

But isn't it just as important for *taxpayers* to know whether *their* money—in the form of billions of dollars in research grants and student aid—is being put to good use? After all, when colleges are doing what they should, they benefit all of us. They undertake vital research that drives our economy. They help Americans who are poor to become Americans who will prosper. And they shape the thoughts and ethics of the young Americans who will soon be leading the country. It's worth knowing, then, which individual colleges and universities fit the bill.

And so, to put The Washington Monthly College Rankings together, we started with a different assumption about what constitutes the "best" schools. We asked ourselves: What are reasonable indicators of how much a school is benefiting the country? We came up with three: how well it performs as an engine of social mobility (ideally helping the poor to get rich rather than the very rich to get very, very rich), how well it does in fostering scientific and humanistic research, and how well it promotes an ethic of service to country. We then devised a way to measure and quantify these criteria (See "A Note on Methodology," page 37) Finally, we placed the schools into rankings. Rankings, we admit, are never perfect, but they're also indispensable.

By devising a set of criteria different from those of other college guides, we arrived at sharply different results. Top schools sank, and medium schools rose. For instance, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, 48th on the *U.S News* list, takes third place on our list, while Princeton, first on the *U.S. News* list, takes 43rd on ours. In short, Pennsylvania State, measured on our terms—by the yardstick of fostering research, national service and social mobility—does a lot more for the country than Princeton.

Don't get us wrong. We're not saying Princeton isn't a superb school. It employs many of the nation's finest minds, and its philosophy department is widely considered the best in the country. Its eating clubs, or whatever they're called, are surely unmatched. Princeton may be a great destination for your tuition dollars, all 31,450 of them, not including room or board. But what if it's a lousy destination for your tax dollars? Each year, Princeton receives millions of dollars in federal research grants. Does it deserve them? What has Princeton done for us lately? This is the only guide that tries to tell you. That, and a bit more.

The Findings

This year, once again, top-tier schools on the *U.S. News* chart fare much worse on our list. State schools are, by our measure, the primary heroes of higher education in the United States today. There are also a few villains to make it interesting. Here are some highlights from this year:

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The *U.S. News* top 10 rarely cracks our top 10.

Of the top 10 national universities in the 2006 rankings of *U.S. News*, only two, Stanford and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, make it onto our top 10. Harvard, first with Princeton on the U.S. News list, occupies only 28th place on our list, mainly because it's weak on national service. MIT takes first place, while four state schools take spots two through five: the University of California, Berkeley; Pennsylvania State, University Park; University of California, Los Angeles; and Texas A&M University.

We love Texas A&M.

Sure, for some of us, Texas A&M evokes imagery of the weak being forced into a locker by the strong, but that doesn't change the numbers. At 60th place on the *U.S. News* rankings, Texas A&M may not be celebrated, but few other schools can compare when it comes to churning out great engineers and scientists in high numbers. It has a healthy level of ROTC enrollment, and it uses federal work-study money towards community service. Texas A&M thus breezes to fifth place on our list.

We love the ladies.

Three cheers for Bryn Mawr College, 21st on the *U.S. News* list but first on our list of liberal arts colleges, and the same to Wellesley, fourth on the *U.S. News* list but second on ours. On every front—social mobility, public service, and research—both schools perform near the top. Does their gender ratio, 100:0 women-to-men, have an influence? We don't know, but it doesn't look like an argument for admitting men.

Emory gets no love from us.

Emory, 20th on the list of *U.S. News*, comes in at 96th on our list. It ranks lowest on our list of any of the *U.S. News* top 25, and it's a full 42 spots behind runner-up Carnegie Mellon. Its social mobility score puts it at 104th place. (Its number of Pell recipients is low, its SAT scores are relatively high, yet its graduation is relatively low.) By spending its money on recruiting applicants with high SAT scores (a way of boosting one's *U.S. News* ranking) Emory has apparently decided reaching out to poorer students is a low priority. Nor does it do especially well in public service or research. That's not great for a school with an endowment of $4.5 billion, the eighth-highest in the nation. Boo, Emory.

The New School University: "unusual intent" meets non-existent results.

The New School University in New York doesn't engage in a lot of *U.S. News* jockeying, but it boasts of goals that are exactly of the sort this guide rewards. Its website speaks of the school's "unusual intent" to bring "actual, positive change to the world." The reality: it's at 228th place on our list. By every measure we have, it drops the ball. (By contrast, The

TOP 30 NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES

		Rank in U.S. News (2005)
1.	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	7
2.	University of California, Berkeley	20
3.	Pennsylvania State University, Uni. Park	48
4.	University of California, Los Angeles	25
5.	Texas A&M University	60
6.	University of California, San Diego	32
7.	Stanford University	5
8.	Cornell University	13
9.	South Carolina State University	*
10.	University of California, Davis	48
11.	University of Wisconsin, Madison	34
12.	Yale University	3
13.	University of Notre Dame	18
14.	University of Chicago	15
15.	University of Washington	45
16.	University of Illinois, Urbana-Champagne	42
17.	University of Texas	52
18.	University of Michigan, Ann Arbor	25
19.	College of William and Mary	31
20.	University of Virginia	23
21.	University of Rochester	34
22.	University of California, Riverside	85
23.	Duke University	5
24.	Alabama A&M University	*
25.	Case Western Reserve University	37
26.	Rice University	17
27.	Ohio State University, Columbus	60
28.	Harvard University	1
29.	Johns Hopkins University	13
30.	University of Pennsylvania	4

* placed in U.S. News' unranked third or fourth tier

The Washington Monthly's college rankings were compiled by Daniel Franklin and Avi Zenilman.

Full rankings of national universities start on p. 30.
Full rankings of liberal arts colleges start on p. 38.

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TOP 30 LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

		Rank in U.S. News (2005)
1.	Bryn Mawr College - PA	21
2.	Wellesley College - MA	4
3.	Wesleyan University - CT	12
4.	Haverford College - PA	8
5.	Amherst College - MA	2
6.	Mount Holyoke College - MA	23
7.	Claremont McKenna College - CA	10
8.	Williams College - MA	1
9.	Whitman College - WA	36
10.	Swarthmore College - PA	3
11.	Wheaton College - IL	55
12.	Carleton College - MN	5
13.	Oberlin College - OH	25
14.	Grinnell College - IA	15
15.	Pomona College - CA	6
16.	Smith College - MA	19
17.	Harvey Mudd College - CA	18
18.	Tougaloo College - MS	*
19.	Bowdoin College - ME	6
20.	Middlebury College - VT	8
21.	Presbyterian College - SC	100
22.	Spelman College - GA	73
23.	Knox College - IL	73
24.	Reed College - OR	47
25.	Colorado College - CO	27
26.	Bates College - ME	21
27.	Fisk University - TN	*
28.	Macalaster College - MN	25
29.	Wofford College - MA	55
30.	Wells College - NY	94

* placed in U.S. News' unranked third or fourth tier

Evergreen State College in Washington State, which approvingly quotes a description of itself as "ultra-progressive," scores much higher, at 47th place.) The best candidate for "actual, positive change" may in fact be the New School.

The Big Ten slaughters the SEC.

Of the 11 members of the Big Ten Conference—University of Illinois, University of Minnesota, Northwestern University, Purdue University, University of Wisconsin, Indiana University, University of Iowa, Ohio State University, University of Michigan, Michigan State University, Pennsylvania State University—all 11 make our top 75. Of the 12 members of the Southeastern Conference—we'll not list them all—only Vanderbilt University and the University of Florida even crack it. Football is fine for schools, as long as they're Midwestern.

UC schools continue to rule.

Sorry, red-staters. By our yardstick, University of California, Berkeley is about the best thing for America we can find. It's good by all of our measurements. The same goes for the rest of the schools in the UC system, four of which make our top 10, the rest of which make our top 80.

A new, better pressure

Let's go back for a moment to the issue of academic excellence. Academic measures are surely as important as those of research, service, or social mobility in allowing us to judge whether colleges are good for the country. We don't include such measures in our rankings, however, for a simple reason: It is currently impossible to get reliable data on how much learning goes on in America's college classrooms. Until we have good information, we'd rather stay silent than try to go down the path of *U.S. News* in devising oddball heuristics. (If it's a choice between wondering about your IQ and having it measured by someone who counts the bumps on your head, it's surely better to wonder about your IQ.)

It's not that such data on learning don't exist. But, thanks mainly to resistance by colleges and universities, especially the elite private ones, that information is under lock and key, unavailable for public inspection. What little we know about the data, however (again, see "Is Our Students Learning?" page 26), suggests that if they were included in our ranking, you'd see similarly boat-rocking results. Many of the top schools on the *U.S. News* list would plummet, and many bottom-tier schools would soar. (No wonder the elite schools don't want the data out.)

We hope the rankings that follow will be useful in several ways. Adults can see how "patriotic" their alma maters are. Prospective students looking for colleges with a strong ethic of service, or with a reputation for fostering PhD candidates, or with records of paying attention to poorer students, will find them here.

Most of all, we hope that citizens and elected officials will look at this guide when making decisions on how to subsidize and regulate higher education. After all, almost all the great challenges America now faces—the fact that incomes are not rising for most Americans, that the Army has resorted to recruiting ex-convicts and skinheads to fill its ranks, and that our economic competitors are increasingly investing in human capital to build the high-wage industries of the future—are ultimately tied to actions taken or not taken by America's colleges and universities.

The point is this: Rankings reflect priorities, and they

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also set them. Our periodic grousing about other college guides isn't so much about the influence they have on prospective students (although it's strong). It's about the influence they have on colleges themselves. In order to improve their rank in the *U.S. News* guide, schools often lose sight of the greater good and focus on throwing a lot of money at the wrong things in the hopes of gaming the system. (Emory's pursuit of high-SAT students over poor students is an example.) By enshrining one set of priorities, such as those set by *U.S. News*, colleges neglect the ones we think are most important.

This guide, then, is a modest bid to generate some pressure of our own, to create a ranking that will inspire schools to aim for standards other than those set out by *U.S. News* and its imitators. As we said last year, imagine if colleges—the many thousands of them—tried to boost their scores on *The Washington Monthly College Rankings*. They'd enroll more low-income students and try to make sure they graduated. They'd encourage their students to join the military or the Peace Corps. And they'd produce more scientists and engineers. In short, our country would grow more democratic, equitable, and prosperous. We don't think it will happen overnight, but we'd like to think our colleges will eventually sit up and pay attention.

And maybe they'd stop sending us so many damn brochures. ♦

TOP 5 SOCIAL MOBILITY UNIVERSITIES

1. South Carolina State University
2. Penn State University, University Park
3. University of California, Los Angeles
4. Jackson State University (MS)
5. New Mexico State University

TOP 5 SERVICE UNIVERSITIES

1. Texas A&M University
2. College of William and Mary (VA)
3. Massachusetts Institute of Technology
4. University of Notre Dame
5. Georgetown University

TOP 5 RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES

1. Stanford University (CA)
2. Massachusetts Institute of Technology
3. Harvard University
4. University of California, Berkeley
5. University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

A Note on Methodology

We settled on two primary goals in our methodology. First, we considered no single category to be more important than any other. Second, the final rankings needed to reflect excellence across the full breadth of our measures, rather than reward an exceptionally high focus on, say, research. All categories were weighted equally when calculating the final score. In order to ensure that each measurement contributed equally to a school's score in any given category, we standardized the data sets so that each had a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one. The data were also adjusted to account for statistical outliers. For the purposes of calculating the final score, no school's performance in any single area was allowed to exceed three standard deviations from the mean of the data set.

Each of our three categories includes several components.We determined the Community Service score by measuring each school's performance in three different areas: the percentage of its students enrolled in the Army and Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps; the percentage of its alumni who are currently serving in the Peace Corps; and the percentage of its federal work-study grants devoted to community service projects. A school's Research score is also based on three measurements: the total amount of an institution's research spending, the number of PhDs awarded by the university in the sciences and engineering, and the percentage of undergraduate alumni who have gone on to receive a PhD in any subject (baccalaureate PhDs). For national universities, we weighted each of these components equally to determine a school's final score in the category.

For liberal arts colleges, which do not grant doctorates, baccalaureate PhDs were given double weight.The baccalaureate PhDs are a new addition to our formula. Last year, research spending made up 100 percent of the liberal arts colleges' research score; this year, it makes up only a third. This rewards liberal arts schools for how well they train students for graduate programs, rather than just for how much they spend on research.We feel this is fairer.

The Social Mobility score is more complicated. We have data that tells us the percentage of a school's students on Pell Grants, which is a good measure of a school's commitment to educating lower-income kids. But, while we'd also like to know how many of these students graduate, schools aren't required to track those figures. Still, because lower-income students at any school are less likely to graduate than wealthier ones, the percentage of Pell Grant recipients is a meaningful indicator in and of itself. If a campus has a large percentage of Pell Grant students—that is to say, if its student body is disproportionately poor—it will tend to diminish the school's overall graduation rate. Last year, using data from all of our schools, we constructed a formula (using a technique called regressional analysis) that predicted a school's likely graduation rate given its percentage of students on Pell. Because this formula disproportionately rewarded more academically exclusive schools (whose students were high achievers and inherently more likely to graduate), however, our formula this year has been altered to predict a school's likely graduation rate given its percentage of Pell students and its average SAT score. (Since most schools only provide the 25th percentile and the 75th percentile of scores, we took the mean of the two.) Schools that outperform their forecasted rate score better than schools that match or, worse, undershoot the mark.In addition, we added a second metric to our Social Mobility score by running a regression that predicted the percentage of students on Pell Grants based on SAT scores. This indicated which selective universities (since selectivity is highly correlated with SAT scores) are making the effort to enroll low-income students. The two formulas were weighted equally. —*The Editors*

Research assistance by Conor Clarke, Lucy Kennedy, and Jeffrey Van der Veer.

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Is Our Students Learning?

The measurements elite colleges don't want you to see.

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By Kevin Carey

Imagine you're about to put a chunk of your life savings into a mutual fund. Now imagine you peruse the various "best mutual fund" guides on the news rack, only to find they're all missing crucial pieces of information. The guides list where the fund managers went to college, how much investment capital they've attracted, and what kind of "experience" investors had at the annual fund meeting. But they don't tell you what you most want to know: What the funds' rates of return have been—or if they've ever made a dime for anyone. You might still decide to invest in a mutual fund, but it would be a heck of a crapshoot. And with their scorecard hidden, fund managers wouldn't be under much pressure to perform, let alone improve.

That imaginary mutual-fund market pretty much shows how America's higher-education market works. Each year prospective college students and their parents pore over glossy brochures and phone-book-sized college guides in order to decide how to invest their hard-earned tuition money—not to mention four years of their lives. Some guides, like the popular rankings published by U.S. News & World Report, base ratings on factors like alumni giving, faculty salaries, and freshman SAT scores. Others identify the top "party schools," most beautiful campuses, and most palatial dorms.

But what's missing from all the rankings is the equivalent of a bottom line. There are no widely available measures of how much learning occurs inside the classroom, or of how much students benefit from their education. This makes the process of selecting a college a bit like throwing darts at a stock table. It also means that colleges and universities, like our imaginary mutual-fund managers, feel little pressure to ensure that students learn. As anyone who's ever snoozed through a giant freshman psychology 101 lecture knows, sitting in a classroom doesn't equal learning; knowledge doesn't come by osmosis.

To be sure, determining the quality of a college education isn't as simple as calculating the yield of a mutual fund. But it's not impossible either. In fact, some reliable measures of student learning, engagement, and post-graduation success have already been developed. These measures reveal where professors are the most effective at teaching, where graduates readily find jobs, and where students walk away with little more than expertise in conspicuous beer consumption. So why haven't you heard about these measures? Because many school administrators don't want you to know. Putting their grades on the table is the last thing many colleges and universities want—especially since those grades would likely show that many of the elite colleges so prized by striving students are not backing up their lofty reputations by doing the best job of helping students learn.

Measures that work

There are three basic ways of trying to measure how well colleges educate students. The most obvious is to use some form of a standardized test. That's how K-12 schools are evaluated. Given the difficulty and controversy K-12 testing has entailed, using standardized tests for college students might seem impossible at first. Elementary and secondary students are at least expected to complete similar courses, to learn the same rules of punctuation and applications of the Pythagorean theorem. Undergraduate studies are far more diverse: Some students choose to spend four years immersed in Ovid, others in organic chemistry.

But there turns out to be an answer: Instead of testing discrete pieces of knowledge, test the higher-order critical thinking, analysis, and communication skills that all college students should learn (and which employers value most). The Collegiate Learning Assessment, recently developed by a subsidiary of the RAND Corporation, does exactly that. Instead of filling in bubbles with a No. 2 pencil, CLA test-takers write lengthy essays, analyzing documents and critiquing arguments.

While several hundred colleges and universities have participated in the CLA, most have kept their results confidential. The University of Texas System, however, has made results public, and they're surprising. The CLA tests freshmen and seniors, gauging the amount of learning students gain during their college careers. Senior scores are also compared to the scores predicted by students' ACT or SAT results. The best Texas university by this measure isn't the flagship, highly ranked UT-Austin campus. The biggest gains are occurring at UT-San Antonio, UT-El Paso, and UT-Permian Basin, all of which are at the *bottom* of the *U.S. News* rankings.

The second, better accepted way of measuring university quality is to take one step back from gauging actual learning, and measure the teaching practices and university environments that, evidence shows, usually lead to learning. Years of study have shown that the more time and effort students spent researching papers, interacting with faculty, and studying with classmates, the more they learn, if their efforts are well-directed. Students' academic engagement can also be measured across disciplines and institutions.

In 1998, a group of educators sat down to translate the research on how students learn into an assessment tool for colleges. Convened by Russell Edgerton, former president of the American Association for Higher Education and then director of education programs for the Pew Charitable Trusts, an all-star cast of higher-education experts developed a comprehensive survey for freshmen and seniors to report the number of books read, papers written, hours spent preparing for class, as well as indicators of student collaboration, student-faculty interaction, and the overall campus environment.

This evaluation, called the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), was launched two years later, with over 275 colleges and universities participating. As of 2006, nearly 1,000 colleges have been evaluated, each receiving a detailed statistical analysis of how well its students are being academically engaged. Housed at Indiana University and administered annually at a cost to each college of as little as $1.50 per student surveyed, NSSE not only shows colleges

Kevin Carey is the research and policy manager of Education Sector, an independent think tank in Washington, D.C.

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how well they're performing but how they stack up against the competition—for instance, whether their school ranks above or below average among peer institutions for faculty providing prompt feedback to students about their work.

Edgerton and Pew convened the original 1998 meeting looking for an alternative to the *U.S. News* rankings. But after investing over $3.5 million to develop and roll out the survey they wanted NSSE to be widely used and financially self-sustaining. That meant getting a lot of institutions to both agree to participate and pay for the privilege. Many were willing, on one condition: the results would be kept in-house and away from public eyes. Institutions knew that public data would inevitably be used to rank and compare colleges. They didn't know where the survey would put them and were worried about looking bad relative to their peers.

As a result, NSSE results for most colleges are—like results from the CLA—unavailable to the public. *U.S. News* has asked for NSSE results, but has only been able to publish what institutions release voluntarily. Less than 15 percent of colleges ranked by the magazine have complied, and none of the top-tier national universities have released results. The newsmagazine *Maclean's*, which ranks Canada's 47 universities, recently tried a different tack, using freedom of information requests to pry NSSE data out of Canadian public university hands. But it would be an immense legal challenge to use this approach for the many hundreds of U.S. universities, and private colleges wouldn't have to comply. The only way to get full NSSE data on all schools would be to make disclosure mandatory. Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) floated legislation to do exactly that a few years ago, but it was quickly torpedoed.

It's understandable that the higher-education establishment—in particular the elite, sought-after schools—would have deep qualms about giving prospective students access to NSSE results: By all indications, that data does much to undermine those schools' claims of superiority. Though NSSE doesn't release data about individual institutions, it does release studies based on that data. In a 2005 report, NSSE analysts found no statistically significant relationship between effective teaching practices and admissions selectivity as rated by the popular *Barron's Guide to Colleges*. Like the CLA, NSSE suggests that the long-established higher education pecking order may have little to do with who educates students best.

The work connection

The third way to judge colleges is by measuring what happens to students after they graduate, such as how quickly they find work and how likely they are to receive promotions. Only a handful of elite universities attempt to maintain databases of high-earning alumni; most institutions have no idea what careers their graduates enter. But this information is actually available; it just hasn't been connected in the right way. State governments gather data about earnings and field of employment for virtually every wage-earner in the nation, so that they can calculate unemployment insurance benefits for people who are laid off work. This data can be matched with student records provided by colleges and universities.

That would give students and parents a huge amount of new, detailed information about which colleges help their graduates get jobs in their field of study and earn a good living. Say you're a Hispanic high-school senior who wants to design the next-generation space shuttle or send men to Mars. You'd want to know which universities nationwide graduate the most Hispanic engineers who get well-paying jobs in the aerospace industry. Linking education and employment data—information that already exists today—would give you the answer.

A handful of states have already made the connection. The Florida Department of Education publishes an annual list of how much money graduates of the state's nine public universities who stay in state to work earn the fall after graduation. The results aren't what one might expect. 2004 graduates of the University of Florida—the state's most prestigious and selective public university, and a top-tier institution according to *U.S. News*—earned $25,773 per year on average. Graduates of Florida International University, which *U.S. News* puts in the bottom tier, earned $34,756, the highest in the state. Once again, some low-ranked universities appear to be doing better than the conventional wisdom gives them credit for.

But these numbers don't appear to have had much of an impact on college choices in Florida—partly because they only apply to students who attend public schools and stay in-state to work, and partly because the Florida Department of Education doesn't even list them on its Web page for students trying to choose a college. Students need ready access to detailed employment outcomes for every college and university in the country. That would take action by the federal government. Unfortunately, the private college lobby is bound and determined to prevent that from ever occurring.

The U.S. Department of Education recently asked colleges and universities to submit enrollment, graduation, and financial records for every student, in order to better calculate things like institutional graduation rates and student costs. Yet despite the fact that strict federal privacy laws would prohibit the names of individual students from ever being released, lobbyists for private colleges put on a full-court press to block the proposal, loudly denouncing it as "Orwellian" and "an assault on Americans' privacy and security in the shadow of the Fourth of July."

Keeping it hush-hush

Higher education's reluctance to be held publicly accountable for student results is particularly frustrating because years of solid research show there is much they could be doing—but aren't—to improve the way they teach students. From 1999 to 2004, Dr. Carol Twigg of the National Center for Academic Transformation at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute worked with 30 colleges and universities to improve their large introductory classes (50 percent of all enrollments at community colleges and 35 percent of enrollments at four-year schools are in just 25 introductory courses in foundational subjects like English and biology). Instead of passively absorbing information in a cavernous lecture hall, students worked in active learning environments where they had online access to tutorials, student discussion groups, and real-time, on-demand feedback and support. The technology

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also reduces the amount of time instructors need to prepare lectures, introduce content, and grade homework, lowering staff costs per student taught.

The result: more learning at a lower cost to the university. Scores in a redesigned biology course at the University of Massachusetts increased by 20 percent, while the cost to the university per student dropped by nearly 40 percent.

But while Twigg's efforts are widely known in higher education circles, there has been no great rush to replicate them nationwide. That's because college administrators don't feel much pressure, for the sake of their careers or of the bottom line, to copy educational best practices. Indeed, universities are notorious for basing their hiring and tenure decisions on publishing and prestige, hardly indicators of the quality of teaching. The amount of time a professor devotes to publishing may be inversely related to the quality of undergraduate instruction. Improving educational quality is a fundamentally optional goal for colleges—and that's unlikely to change without external pressure.

The refusal of colleges and universities to be held accountable is beginning to create a backlash in Washington, though not necessarily a helpful one. Earlier this year, the GOP-controlled House of Representatives voted to require all colleges and universities that increase tuition and fees by more than double the inflation rate to justify their actions to the federal government. While it stems from an understandable concern about college affordability, the move smacks of Nixon-era price controls (ironic coming from a Republican Congress). But the bigger problem is that lawmakers are mandating new reporting in the part of the market that's already most transparent: tuition and fees. Instead of trying to regulate the price of college, Congress should require colleges to disclose what students and parents don't already know: the quality of teaching in the classroom. Then students can decide for themselves if a particular institution is worth the money.

That kind of federally mandated disclosure is anathema to colleges that have long enjoyed a comfortable cocoon of privacy. But it would certainly be familiar terrain for the tens of thousands of publicly traded companies that file detailed financial reports each quarter with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Despite the fact that these companies don't enjoy higher education's tax-exempt status, they are far *more* transparent and accountable to the public.

The higher-education sector is ultimately driven by the market. Colleges and universities will strive and compete on whatever terms the market provides. As long as status and success are predicated on building endowments and recruiting more students with high SAT scores, college leaders will continue to focus on fundraising, marketing, and little else. If, on the other hand, success meant teaching students effectively and helping them do well in their lives and careers, universities would change their priorities. They'd recruit better teachers and seek out the Carol Twiggs of the world. Institutions that had focused on their mission—teaching students—and been great at it would finally get the recognition they deserve. But success can't be defined by teaching and learning until public information is available *about* teaching and learning. We live in a time where that kind of information is finally within reach. Too bad most of it is locked behind ivy-covered walls. ♦

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NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES

Overall Score: Overall score represents the combined score of our three metrics—social mobility, research, and service—where the highest is 100 and the lowest is zero. Each individual metric is worth 33 and a third total points.

Social Mobility: The first column shows the percentage of students receiving Pell grants. The second shows predicted rate of graduation, based on incoming SAT scores and Pell grant percentages, versus the actual rate of graduation. The third shows the difference between the actual graduation rate and the predicted graduation rate—a measure of how well the school performs as an engine of social mobility (see "A Note on Methodology," p. 25)—arrived at by subtracting the latter from the former. (The higher the number, the better; negative numbers indicate sub par performance.) Rank follows in parentheses.

Research: The first column shows the number of dollars (in millions) received from the federal government in research grants. Rank follows in parentheses. The second shows the school's ranking in the number of Bachelor's recipients who go on to receive PhDs. The third ranks the school by number of PhDs awarded.

Service: The first column ranks the school by percentage of students who go on to serve in the Peace Corps. The second column ranks the school by percentage of students who serve in ROTC. The third gives the percentage of funds in federal work-study money that goes to community service (versus non-community service); rank follows in parentheses.

		SOCIAL MOBILITY			RESEARCH			SERVICE		
	OVERALL SCORE	% students receiving Pell grants	Predicted/actual grad rate based on % of Pell recipients and incoming SATs	Difference between predicted/ actual grad rates (rank)	Research grant $ in millions (rank)	Bachelor's to P.h.D. rank	P.h.D.'s awarded (rank)	Peace Corps rank	ROTC rank	% of federal work-study funds spent on service (rank)
1. Massachussets Institute of Technology - MA (1)	100	15	99/92	-7 (189)	486 (16)	1	433 (4)	40	4	19 (73)
2. University of California, Berkeley* - CA (3)	100	34	77/87	10 (30)	507 (13)	15	537 (1)	22	127	27 (31)
3. Pennsylvania State University, Uni. Park* - PA (6)	99	46	62/83	21 (3)	533 (10)	54	393 (9)	75	42	24 (46)
4. University of California, Los Angeles - CA (2)	93	37	73/87	14 (12)	849 (2)	35	432 (5)	54	134	22 (52)
5. Texas A & M University* - TX (7)	85	19	66/76	10 (28)	456 (19)	98	364 (11)	130	7	34 (13)
6. University of California, San Diego* - CA (8)	82	32	69/83	14 (15)	647 (6)	32	281 (22)	68	159	31 (21)
7. Stanford University - CA (5)	81	13	94/95	1 (121)	603 (7)	5	469 (3)	45	159	24 (41)
8. Cornell University - NY (4)	81	16	86/92	6 (57)	555 (9)	13	351 (13)	25	51	13 (144)
9. South Carolina State University* - SC (40)	78	70	20/53	33 (1)	3 (215)	125	0 (234)	233	2	22 (50)
10. University of California, Davis* - CA (17)	78	30	62/81	19 (6)	482 (17)	41	333 (17)	67	108	20 (58)
11. University of Wisconsin, Madison* - WI (12)	75	13	74/76	2 (105)	721 (4)	44	429 (6)	23	120	30 (25)
12. Yale University - CT (15)	74	10	98/96	-2 (161)	388 (28)	3	208 (35)	8	159	19 (77)
13. University of Notre Dame - IN (27)	72	10	87/96	9 (31)	60 (122)	25	102 (90)	21	8	19 (78)
14. University of Chicago - IL (20)	71	12	93/87	-6 (186)	247 (51)	8	224 (30)	4	159	20 (62)
15. University of Washington* - WA (14)	71	25	67/73	6 (54)	685 (5)	73	344 (16)	20	90	10 (179)
16. University of Illinois, Urbana-Champagne* - IL (13)	71	16	76/80	4 (74)	494 (15)	42	396 (8)	80	74	31 (22)
17. University of Texas* - TX (23)	71	21	70/74	4 (75)	344 (30)	46	415 (7)	62	130	35 (11)
18. University of Michigan, Ann Arbor* - MI (10)	70	13	80/87	7 (46)	780 (3)	29	474 (2)	34	97	8 (222)
19. College of William and Mary* - VA (31)	69	8	84/89	5 (69)	44 (134)	16	29 (166)	3	30	24 (40)
20. University of Virginia* - VA (22)	69	8	81/92	11 (19)	206 (61)	27	186 (41)	6	18	9 (201)
21. University of Rochester - NY (36)	69	17	81/81	0 (138)	286 (42)	10	145 (56)	98	14	21 (53)
22. University of California, Riverside* - CA (38)	69	43	49/64	15 (9)	112 (96)	111	103 (89)	117	159	51 (3)
23. Duke University - NC (21)	69	11	95/94	-1 (159)	520 (11)	12	188 (39)	12	37	11 (174)
24. Alabama A & M University - AL (64)	69	70	22/33	11 (25)	37 (147)	241	5 (222)	233	35	67 (2)
25. Case Western Reserve University - OH (24)	68	16	81/81	0 (142)	251 (49)	14	138 (59)	47	159	48 (4)
26. Rice University - TX (35)	67	11	92/91	-1 (149)	52 (125)	6	104 (88)	10	46	16 (101)
27. Ohio State University, Columbus* - OH (29)	67	30	63/62	-1 (154)	496 (14)	122	350 (14)	95	152	37 (10)
28. Harvard University - MA (16)	67	8	98/98	0 (148)	409 (26)	7	361 (12)	51	159	18 (88)
29. Johns Hopkins University - MD (11)	66	10	88/88	0 (137)	1244 (1)	19	136 (28)	73	28	11 (167)
30. University of Pennsylvania - PA (9)	66	10	92/94	2 (114)	565 (8)	23	234 (29)	26	103	14 (122)
31. Georgetown University - DC (26)	65	10	88/93	5 (68)	100 (102)	30	45 (141)	2	17	11 (173)
32. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill* - NC (25)	64	15	77/81	4 (81)	391 (27)	43	243 (26)	24	32	13 (138)
33. University of Southern California - CA (19)	63	19	83/82	-1 (144)	414 (24)	133	247 (25)	55	52	24 (44)
34. Brown University - RI (43)	63	12	92/96	4 (76)	125 (88)	9	105 (85)	7	159	10 (190)
35. Dartmouth College - NH (37)	61	14	93/95	2 (116)	156 (78)	11	55 (122)	1	159	7 (239)
36. Columbia University - NY (32)	60	16	91/93	2 (107)	438 (21)	17	243 (26)	58	159	12 (152)
37. University of Florida* - FL (30)	60	24	72/78	6 (52)	430 (23)	60	380 (10)	89	100	9 (193)
38. Iowa State University* - IA (34)	60	24	67/66	-1 (150)	200 (64)	112	183 (42)	114	95	48 (5)
39. University of Arizona* - AZ (39)	59	25	57/57	0 (143)	455 (20)	94	261 (24)	86	86	34 (12)
40. Ohio University* - OH (133)	59	42	51/70	19 (4)	38 (145)	131	48 (135)	56	59	12 (160)
41. Fordham University - NY (57)	59	28	66/77	11 (26)	4 (211)	106	54 (125)	60	16	18 (82)
42. Northwestern University - IL (18)	59	9	90/92	2 (102)	320 (35)	21	224 (30)	28	88	12 (165)
43. Princeton University - NJ (44)	58	8	96/97	1 (127)	180 (68)	4	211 (34)	115	40	10 (181)
44. New Mexico State University* - NM (154)	57	68	38/43	5 (66)	109 (97)	137	46 (139)	126	99	14 (127)
45. Washington University in St. Louis* - MO (28)	56	7	93/92	-1 (163)	474 (18)	40	137 (62)	46	47	20 (61)

Schools' ranking last year in parentheses.
* Public University
** Not ranked last year

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	OVERALL SCORE	SOCIAL MOBILITY			RESEARCH			SERVICE		
		% students receiving Pell grants	Predicted/actual grad rate based on % of Pell recipients and incoming SATs	Difference between predicted/ actual grad rates (rank)	Research grant $ in millions (rank)	Bachelor's to P.h.D. rank	P.h.D.'s awarded (rank)	Peace Corps rank	ROTC rank	% of federal work-study funds spent on service (rank)
46. Jackson State University* - MS (69)	56	75	24/40	16 (8)	29 (158)	85	13 (186)	233	27	11 (172)
47. Vanderbilt University - TN (33)	55	12	85/86	1 (126)	276 (45)	39	111 (79)	38	26	16 (105)
48. Utah State University* - UT (123)	55	53	51/45	-6 (182)	139 (83)	134	42 (143)	174	159	39 (6)
49. Marquette University - WI (65)	55	15	66/77	11 (23)	11 (195)	72	19 (186)	35	6	7 (233)
50. Michigan State University - MI (68)	55	19	60/71	11 (18)	321 (34)	83	286 (21)	63	151	24 (45)
51. Virginia Tech* - VA (48)	54	13	67/74	7 (44)	248 (50)	63	212 (33)	96	11	12 (147)
52. Widener University* - PA (72)	53	27	42/60	18 (5)	0 (231)	186	0 (234)	206	3	30 (23)
53. Rutgers University, New Brunswick - NJ (67)	53	39	64/71	7 (45)	275 (46)	59	224 (30)	113	149	19 (71)
54. Carnegie Mellon University - PA (41)	53	12	86/85	-1 (155)	186 (67)	22	165 (49)	103	13	16 (100)
55. Wake Forest University - NC (51)	53	8	82/86	4 (84)	130 (84)	24	98 (148)	9	33	9 (203)
56. Kent State University* - OH (156)	52	58	41/49	8 (43)	15 (181)	170	53 (127)	167	104	14 (129)
57. University of California, Santa Barbara* - CA (53)	52	26	66/75	9 (29)	149 (81)	9	179 (44)	48	159	20 (65)
58. Indiana University, Bloomington* - IN (62)	52	17	57/71	14 (11)	338 (31)	102	165 (49)	70	141	28 (27)
59. University of Iowa* - IA (50)	52	18	65/66	1 (119)	292 (39)	113	153 (53)	59	154	38 (8)
60. Boston University - MA (60)	52	11	75/75	0 (145)	224 (56)	48	172 (45)	16	22	10 (187)
61. University of Oregon* - OR (81)	52	25	56/62	6 (61)	45 (133)	104	85 (101)	12	49	14 (19)
62. Syracuse University - NY (48)	51	19	68/79	11 (21)	49 (129)	116	105 (85)	65	79	26 (33)
63. Georgia Institute of Technology* - GA (51)	51	15	82/72	-10 (212)	364 (29)	68	303 (20)	106	21	17 (93)
64. New York University - NY (46)	51	18	80/80	0 (139)	242 (52)	100	183 (42)	41	159	26 (35)
65. University of Idaho* - ID (83)	51	37	53/54	1 (125)	85 (111)	163	42 (143)	29	38	12 (156)
66. Univeristy of Pittsburgh* - PA (56)	51	21	69/67	-2 (162)	410 (25)	84	188 (39)	49	84	18 (83)
67. University of Minnesota, Twin Cities* - MN (52)	50	18	69/56	-13 (224)	509 (12)	99	345 (115)	66	129	27 (32)
68. University of California, Santa Cruz* - CA (90)	50	26	61/69	8 (35)	78 (113)	33	89 (97)	31	159	19 (76)
69. George Washington University - DC (42)	49	10	78/79	1 (123)	92 (105)	130	117 (74)	13	29	15 (115)
70. University of the Pacific - CA (76)	49	32	63/70	7 (49)	2 (222)	82	8 (218)	74	159	32 (17)
71. Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute - NY (66)	49	18	79/81	2 (115)	51 (128)	26	138 (59)	165	20	14 (125)
72. University of California, Irvine* - CA (**)	49	28	66/80	14 (13)	235 (55)	67	136 (64)	120	159	14 (124)
73. Brandeis University - MA (99)	48	13	83/89	6 (70)	51 (127)	18	50 (130)	15	159	12 (162)
74. Tufts University - MA (75)	48	11	89/91	2 (110)	113 (95)	20	88 (98)	17	159	12 (158)
75. Purdue University West Lafayette* - IN (55)	48	17	61/64	3 (89)	309 (37)	97	333 (17)	129	56	20 (64)
76. University of Kentucky* - KY (117)	48	38	58/60	2 (120)	272 (47)	115	151 (54)	122	117	12 (164)
77. Texas A&M University, Kingsville* - TX (117)	48	53	33/27	-6 (185)	10 (197)	226	228 (2)	155	9	17 (90)
78. Pepperdine University - CA (116)	48	21	69/77	8 (34)	0 (231)	87	0 (234)	11	159	20 (63)
79. University of Maryland, College Park* - MD (58)	48	17	74/73	-1 (152)	322 (33)	55	327 (13)	57	155	13 (136)
80. University of New Mexico* - NM (137)	47	51	48/40	-8 (203)	158 (77)	124	135 (65)	123	106	16 (98)
81. Univeristy of Montana* - MT (70)	47	39	51/44	-7 (192)	44 (136)	179	27 (167)	27	89	24 (43)
82. Tulane University - LA (86)	47	17	81/73	-8 (200)	118 (92)	94	74 (106)	30	34	16 (104)
83. Auburn University* - AL (73)	47	16	58/65	7 (47)	124 (89)	149	97 (93)	136	44	38 (9)
84. University of Colorado, Boulder* - CO (59)	46	14	65/66	1 (118)	437 (22)	80	207 (36)	32	65	8 (216)
85. University of Missouri, Columbia* - MO (71)	44	17	66/68	2 (109)	205 (62)	101	135 (65)	90	75	27 (30)
86. Oklahoma State University* - OK (96)	44	66	58/58	0 (122)	103 (100)	150	109 (82)	87	150	30 (24)
87. Oregon State University* - OR (85)	44	30	52/60	8 (39)	168 (75)	152	132 (67)	79	48	9 (205)
88. Howard University - DC (114)	44	36	57/60	3 (98)	38 (144)	76	57 (119)	156	87	19 (68)
89. University of Massachussets, Amherst* - MA (94)	44	23	59/62	3 (95)	114 (93)	70	166 (48)	69	122	21 (57)
90. Arizona State University* - AZ (93)	43	32	55/55	0 (140)	146 (82)	177	206 (37)	143	137	23 (47)
91. Loyola University Chicago - IL (118)	43	26	62/65	3 (97)	38 (143)	86	48 (135)	152	159	38 (7)
92. University of Illinois, Chicago - IL (88)	42	34	50/45	-5 (178)	292 (40)	81	132 (67)	81	39	9 (199)
93. Northern Arizona University* - AZ (107)	42	35	43/50	7 (42)	17 (176)	169	18 (190)	61	67	17 (89)
94. University of Delaware* - DE (105)	42	10	68/76	8 (38)	101 (101)	93	141 (58)	104	135	32 (19)
95. University of San Francisco - CA (104)	42	23	58/66	8 (37)	1 (230)	91	0 (234)	72	23	13 (139)

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NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES

	OVERALL SCORE	SOCIAL MOBILITY			RESEARCH			SERVICE		
		% students receiving Pell grants	Predicted/actual grad rate based on % of Pell recipients and incoming SATs	Difference between predicted/ actual grad rates (rank)	Research grant $ in millions (rank)	Bachelor's to P.h.D. rank	P.h.D.'s awarded (rank)	Peace Corps rank	ROTC rank	% of federal work-study funds spent on service (rank)
96. Emory University - GA (49)	41	13	87/86	-1 (146)	323 (32)	28	92 (94)	51	159	10 (176)
97. University of San Diego - CA (54)	41	16	64/73	9 (33)	1 (227)	142	0 (234)	37	1	11 (166)
98. University of Southern Mississippi* - MI (95)	41	47	46/48	2 (101)	35 (149)	135	58 (118)	183	123	114 (126)
99. University of Wyoming* - WY (87)	41	27	54/56	2 (113)	60 (121)	107	31 (159)	78	72	25 (36)
100. National-Louis University - IL (122)	41	56	26/30	4 (80)	0 (231)	203	0 (234)	92	159	21 (54)
101. Catholic University of America - DC (112)	40	12	61/73	12 (17)	24 (166)	66	26 (168)	33	159	29 (26)
102. Miami University, Oxford* - OH (125)	40	21	69/80	11 (20)	14 (185)	53	30 (161)	64	119	9 (206)
103. University of New Hampshire* - NH (110)	40	18	59/72	13 (16)	96 (103)	103	36 (152)	44	70	13 (137)
104. Boston College - MA (79)	40	10	82/89	7 (40)	32 (152)	45	42 (143)	19	159	12 (157)
105. American University - DC (182)	39	13	74/73	-1 (160)	3 (218)	78	49 (132)	5	159	14 (123)
106. Clarkson University - NY (128)	39	26	65/64	-1 (147)	7 (201)	114	14 (202)	148	12	8 (230)
107. Colorado State University* - CO (82)	39	18	58/64	6 (59)	187 (66)	156	129 (69)	42	138	16 (103)
108. Mississippi State University* - MS (95)	39	31	50/58	8 (41)	166 (76)	160	46 (139)	169	128	19 (75)
109. California Institute of Technology - CA (63)	39	7	100/89	-11 (227)	241 (53)	2	164 (51)	127	159	9 (207)
110. University of Connecticut* - CT (138)	38	18	65/71	6 (56)	190 (65)	110	170 (46)	210	136	20 (60)
111. University of Missouri, Rolla* - MO (121)	38	25	70/64	-6 (188)	36 (148)	36	61 (114)	149	31	12 (155)
112. St. John's University - NY(**)	38	32	49/66	17 (7)	1 (224)	232	24 (175)	229	69	13 (145)
113. Kansas State University - KS (142)	37	27	53/63	10 (27)	113 (94)	167	109 (82)	88	77	7 (235)
114. Tennessee State University* - TN (178)	37	57	30/44	14 (10)	14 (182)	189	11 (209)	233	159	5 (242)
115. North Carolina State University* - NC (78)	37	17	65/67	2 (104)	286 (41)	136	272 (23)	105	132	10 (185)
116. Lehigh University - PA (92)	37	11	80/84	4 (78)	29 (157)	34	48 (135)	134	24	8 (228)
117. Montana State University, Bozeman* - MT (170)	37	32	55/47	-8 (201)	92 (106)	175	32 (158)	36	68	12 (154)
118. University of Cincinnati* - OH (165)	37	39	56/48	-8 (199)	255 (48)	158	137 (62)	147	126	9 (208)
119. Clark University - MA (177)	37	21	66/69	3 (92)	6 (205)	37	21 (182)	14	159	7 (237)
120. Washington State University* - WA (202)	36	28	55/60	5 (67)	175 (72)	191	121 (71)	84	118	8 (229)
121. Florida Institute of Technology - FL (106)	36	22	63/54	-9 (205)	8 (200)	52	25 (170)	191	5	18 (81)
122. University of Vermont* - VT (101)	36	17	62/67	5 (73)	105 (98)	88	34 (156)	71	102	19 (69)
123. Texas A & M University*, Commerce - TX (179)	36	49	39/38	-1 (157)	0 (231)	126	1 (230)	224	159	26 (34)
124. Brigham Young University - UT (135)	36	35	66/70	4 (90)	23 (171)	49	54 (125)	226	80	0 (245)
125. Clark Atlanta University - GA (188)	36	59	32/34	2 (103)	13 (188)	143	3 (226)	139	159	8 (220)
126. University of Georgia* - GA (80)	36	14	70/72	2 (100)	300 (28)	123	193 (38)	100	133	12 (159)
127. University of Oklahoma* - OK (129)	36	24	62/55	-7 (191)	174 (73)	159	101 (91)	107	114	24 (42)
128. University of South Carolina, Columbia* - SC (134)	36	24	62/64	2 (106)	121 (90)	120	105 (85)	187	64	15 (114)
129. University of South Dakota* - SD (**)	36	32	48/43	-5 (179)	11 (196)	153	11 (209)	178	58	31 (20)
130. Temple University* - PA (127)	36	33	54/54	0 (136)	71 (115)	187	110 (80)	198	148	21 (56)
131. Clemson University* - SC (103)	36	15	69/72	3 (91)	153 (79)	146	91 (95)	91	62	14 (128)
132. Florida State University* - FL (120)	36	26	61/65	4 (79)	152 (80)	96	112 (76)	112	139	9 (192)
133. Baylor University - TX (109)	35	19	66/72	6 (64)	4 (208)	74	18 (190)	102	159	27 (28)
134. Worcester Polytechnic Institute - MA (111)	35	14	75/79	4 (85)	12 (191)	56	17 (195)	159	15	5 (243)
135. University of Nebraska, Lincoln* - NE (100)	34	22	66/62	-4 (175)	276 (44)	119	118 (73)	76	105	9 (204)
136. University of Denver - CO (89)	34	16	63/69	6 (55)	10 (198)	109	25 (170)	18	159	16 (99)
137. University of Alabama* - AL (181)	34	24	58/61	3 (94)	34 (151)	108	77 (102)	182	112	22 (51)
138. University of Kansas* - KS (152)	33	16	59/57	-2 (153)	173 (74)	90	128 (70)	43	93	13 (131)
139. West Virginia University* - WV (157)	33	27	51/55	4 (83)	105 (99)	118	106 (84)	160	60	10 (189)
140. University of Dayton - OH (126)	33	13	63/74	11 (22)	53 (124)	51	14 (202)	77	55	8 (218)

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Apps Lit

What the new wave of college-admissions fiction tells us about higher education.

By Rachel Morris

Not long after graduating from Princeton with a literature degree and $81,000 in student loans, Noah, the son of a struggling single mother from rural Virginia, took a job as an SAT tutor on Manhattan's Upper East Side. For $395 an hour, he schooled the children of the improbably rich in techniques guaranteed to lift their standardized test scores by as much as 350 points.

Noah's most difficult charge was Dylan Thayer. Dylan's mother, an immaculately coiffed psychiatrist with a weakness for writing herself Ritalin prescriptions, hoped to boost Dylan's SAT writing score from a disappointing 420 to the 650 required by the lacrosse recruiter at UPenn. Alas, Dylan spent too much time at hip Manhattan clubs and recovering from the ensuing hangovers to concentrate on studying. One week before the test, Dr. Thayer realized that the phalanx of tutors she had procured couldn't compensate for her son's chronic indolence. She handed Noah a check for $80,000 and implored him to sit the test on Dylan's behalf.

Such is the plot of Eliot Schrefer's *Glamorous Disasters*, a morality tale about the many ways in which money buys access to a good college. It's satirical, but only just. Forty years after Congress passed the Higher Education Act, America's best colleges are hardly the machinery by which a meritocracy functions. They're more like finishing schools for the rich. Pell Grants haven't kept pace with tuition hikes; top schools increasingly bid for star applicants with scholarships based on "merit," not need. At the same time, services offering the wealthy an edge—private SAT tutoring, essay editing, application "packaging"—have graduated into a multimillion-dollar industry. Like defense-department officials who quit to work for Lockheed Martin, former admissions officers help students craft essays and fortify their resumes with unusual extracurriculars for as much as $30,000. Consequently, wealthier students are displacing both low-income and middle-class students at the most selective colleges—where 74 percent of the students now come from the top socioeconomic quartile.

This situation has evidently horrified the writerly imagination, because Schrefer's book is one of four novels published this year about the seamier side of college admissions. In *Jane Austen in Scarsdale: Or Love, Death, and the SAT*s, a romantically frustrated guidance counselor in Westchester County negotiates checkbook-wielding parents and an unscrupulous educational consultant named Curtis Fink. *Academy X* follows a hapless Manhattan private school instructor ensnared by a wealthy student in a plot to get her into Princeton. But the most infamous example is Kaavya Viswanathan's fable of a Harvard-obsessed overachiever who fabricates the persona of a party girl, *How Opal Mehta Got Kissed, Got Wild, and Got a Life* (which in March was discovered to have been substantially plagiarized). It's no surprise that the applications racket—you could call it the college-admissions-consulting complex—has spawned its very own minor fictional genre. It thrives on the status anxieties of well-to-do parents, and so offers plenty of material for those most American of literary themes: aspiration and money.

But although the press materials for *Glamorous Disasters* promise "echoes" of *The Great Gatsby*, it's Jane Austen that these writers channel. Viswanathan claims her as an influence; *Jane Austen in Scarsdale* is modeled on *Persuasion*, and the teacher in *Academy X* imagines his most spoiled student as "my Emma." That makes sense. College is to an American kid what marriage was to an Austen heroine—the gatekeeper to a certain social status and its attendant income.

What's perhaps most disturbing about this crop of admissions lit is that many of the scenarios are plucked from the writers' own experiences. Andrew Trees, the author of *Academy X*, teaches at Horace Mann, an exclusive New York private school, while Schrefer worked as a private SAT tutor. (None of his clients tried to bribe him to sit the test, but he knew of a teenager who took it for others for $5,000.)

But the most unnerving example of truth trumping fiction is that of Viswanathan, whose parents hired IvyWise, a consulting service, to prep her for her Harvard application. Viswanathan's adviser encouraged her to showcase her writing, which these days means landing a $500,000 book deal with Little, Brown. Viswanathan's editor then enlisted a media firm to help her "conceptualize" the book. In the novel, Opal's mission to reinvent herself backfires when her friends discover her game-plan, but in real life Viswanathan suffered a far more public humiliation when stories detailing numerous instances of plagiarism in *Opal Mehta* hit *The New York Times* and the "Today" show. Little, Brown withdrew the book and nixed plans for a second novel.

It's not shocking that Viswanathan's reality collided so spectacularly with her fiction. When parents hire professionals to make their kids "look raw without over-packaging them" (as one consultant put it to the *Times*), it's difficult to know where the marketing ends and the student begins. Nor, as the books reflect, do colleges discourage these practices. Opal makes it to Harvard despite her deception (Viswanathan is also still there). *Academy X*'s villain fails to scheme her way into Princeton, but she gets her second choice, Wellesley. Admittedly, none of these books is great literature. But they tell some cruel truths about an educational system that, once upon a time, at least aspired to be governed by merit. Just in case we miss the point, in *Glamorous Disasters*, Dr. Thayer drives it home: "You live in America, Noah. Money is the only proof of merit we have."

– **Rachel Morris** is an editor of *The Washington Monthly*.

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	OVERALL SCORE	SOCIAL MOBILITY			RESEARCH			SERVICE		
		% students receiving Pell grants	Predicted/actual grad rate based on % of Pell recipients and incoming SATs	Difference between predicted/ actual grad rates (rank)	Research grant $ in millions (rank)	Bachelor's to P.h.D. rank	P.h.D.'s awarded (rank)	Peace Corps rank	ROTC rank	% of federal work-study funds spent on service (rank)
141. Illinois State University* - IL (172)	32	21	56/62	6 (62)	4 (209)	138	1 (230)	138	45	19 (70)
142. University of Maine, Orono* - ME (119)	32	30	52/56	4 (77)	96 (117)	145	30 (161)	163	107	13 (135)
143. University of Hawaii, Manoa* - HI (130)	32	21	55/56	1 (130)	179 (69)	172	99 (92)	158	57	16 (95)
144. University of Tennessee* - TN (147)	32	23	61/59	-2 (164)	217 (58)	195	151 (54)	124	116	10 (183)
145. Old Dominion University - VA (115)	32	28	50/46	-4 (172)	30 (155)	174	47 (138)	170	19	15 (111)
146. Bowling Green State University* - OH (141)	32	29	47/60	13 (14)	7 (202)	105	37 (150)	177	109	9 (202)
147. University of Bridgeport - CT (225)	31	41	29/51	22 (2)	0 (231)	79	0 (234)	150	159	3 (244)
148. Indiana University* - PA (161)	31	34	44/50	6 (60)	1 (228)	127	4 (224)	179	143	8 (226)
149. DePaul University - IL (155)	31	28	59/61	2 (108)	3 (216)	211	9 (217)	146	159	25 (37)
150. University of South Alabama* - AL (160)	31	34	49/34	-15 (232)	19 (175)	208	3 (226)	215	54	34 (15)
151. University of Texas, El Paso* - TX (203)	31	54	31/27	-4 (170)	27 (162)	194	14 (202)	232	76	9 (194)
152. Polytechnic University - NY (91)	30	55	59/43	-16 (236)	12 (193)	77	21 (182)	233	159	7 (236)
153. University of Utah* - UT (108)	30	28	57/48	-9 (209)	224 (57)	128	144 (57)	157	101	12 (149)
154. South Dakota State University* - SD (150)	30	28	48/55	7 (53)	28 (160)	204	21 (182)	164	41	8 (211)
155. University of Mississippi* - MS (158)	29	25	52/54	2 (99)	85 (110)	147	30 (161)	207	61	16 (107)
156. Southern Methodist University - TX (124)	29	16	70/71	1 (117)	10 (199)	57	24 (175)	82	159	19 (74)
157. Nova Southeastern University- FL (143)	29	42	46/42	-4 (169)	5 (207)	237	112 (76)	233	159	19 (67)
158. University of South Florida* - FL (131)	29	30	56/47	-9 (206)	213 (60)	173	90 (96)	196	91	14 (130)
159. Michigan Technological University* - MI (168)	29	21	70/63	-7 (193)	30 (156)	62	35 (154)	93	53	8 (221)
160. Southern Illinois University, Carbondale* - IL (164)	29	35	47/43	-4 (171)	53 (123)	129	55 (122)	132	111	12 (151)
161. Texas Christian University - TX (179)	29	14	63/67	4 (87)	4 (212)	92	11 (209)	85	36	10 (184)
162. University of Tulsa - OK (195)	29	22	71/60	-11 (213)	12 (194)	58	11 (209)	53	159	20 (59)
163. University of La Verne - CA (148)	28	37	46/47	1 (111)	0 (231)	239	1 (230)	83	159	15 (116)
164. University of Nevada, Las Vegas* - NV (183)	28	21	46/41	-5 (181)	42 (139)	236	14 (202)	209	145	82 (1)
165. University of Arkansas - AK (167)	28	24	61/53	-8 (197)	129 (85)	166	77 (102)	151	50	13 (132)
166. University of North Dakota* - ND (169)	28	25	53/54	1 (124)	42 (140)	141	17 (195)	200	66	17 (94)
167. State Univ. of New York, Binghamton* - NY (146)	28	14	73/78	5 (63)	23 (169)	38	16 (116)	97	159	9 (200)
168. Biola University - CA (206)	28	24	58/62	4 (82)	0 (231)	139	6 (221)	94	159	18 (179)
169. Florida International University* - FL (149)	28	36	54/47	-7 (190)	52 (126)	199	38 (148)	204	143	16 (197)
170. University of Miami - FL (136)	28	20	72/71	-1 (151)	178 (70)	65	71 (108)	131	151	8 (215)
171. University of Toledo* - OH (192)	27	33	46/45	-1 (158)	24 (168)	218	37 (150)	202	73	16 (96)
172. Hofstra University - NY (140)	27	23	60/51	-9 (204)	1 (229)	155	24 (175)	230	63	27 (29)
173. University of Arkansas, Little Rock* - AK (244)	27	48	31 /26	-5 (180)	24 (167)	227	2 (228)	233	159	25 (38)
174. Illinois Institute of Technology - IL (74)	26	21	74/61	-13 (225)	26 (165)	71	61 (114)	233	10	8 (224)
175. University of Alabama, Birmingham* - AL (84)	26	32	50/38	-12 (221)	284 (43)	183	72 (107)	217	92	14 (121)
176. San Diego State University* - CA (186)	26	30	52/46	-6 (187)	67 (118)	164	8 (218)	111	53	18 (87)
177. Duquesne University - PA (153)	26	19	58/69	11 (24)	7 (203)	144	10 (213)	172	159	18 (80)
178. Seton Hall University - NJ (174)	26	22	57/57	0 (132)	2 (223)	140	19 (186)	233	25	10 (178)
179. University of Akron* - OH (205)	26	42	44/35	-9 (202)	28 (159)	195	76 (104)	185	144	12 (161)
180. Northern Illinois University* - IL (198)	25	28	45/51	6 (51)	12 (190)	192	26 (168)	197	140	15 (108)
181. Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge* - LA (171)	25	19	63/56	-7 (196)	315 (36)	165	138 (59)	186	85	7 (231)
182. University of Rhode Island* - RI (190)	24	21	57/57	0 (141)	62 (120)	154	55 (122)	109	71	8 (227)
183. Louisana Tech University* - LA (180)	24	28	48/51	3 (96)	15 (180)	180	19 (186)	223	159	23 (49)
184. Rutgers University, Newark - NJ (199)	24	28	54/55	1 (135)	0 (231)	132	36 (152)	227	159	19 (72)
185. Stevens Institute of Technology - NJ (194)	23	17	74/75	1 (128)	15 (178)	69	22 (181)	108	159	8 (219)
186. East Carolina University* - NC (187)	23	29	47/53	6 (58)	13 (189)	221	5 (222)	221	124	10 (177)
187. Texas Woman's University* - TX (222)	23	41	38/42	4 (86)	3 (217)	196	17 (195)	175	159	8 (225)
188. University of Memphis* - TN (217)	23	41	49/36	-13 (226)	39 (142)	184	51 (129)	211	98	8 (212)
189. North Dakota State University - ND (151)	23	25	51/52	1 (129)	92 (106)	181	25 (170)	144	142	13 (133)
190. Central Michigan University* - MI (209)	23	26	47/55	8 (32)	2 (219)	213	10 (213)	214	83	8 (217)

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Now That's Classy

How Teach for America turned national service into a status symbol.

By Avi Zenilman

Next month, 1,000 of my closest friends and I will begin our senior year at Columbia. We will then enter a year-long panic about our futures. We'll consider all the usual options. Wannabe lawyers will weigh medium-term futures as law students in Palo Alto or paralegals at Boies, Schiller & Flexner. Anthro and science majors alike will browse the full-page, color ads in the college paper from consulting firms like Bain and investment banks like Lehman Brothers. And then, of course, there's Teach for America.

In "The Organization Kid," a 2001 *Atlantic Monthly* article about Princeton undergrads, David Brooks admired the work ethic of elite overachievers. But he lamented their lack of purpose beyond finding "new tests to ace, new clubs to be president of, new services to perform." Brooks had a point. As *The Washington Monthly* reported in 2002 (Joshua Green, "The Other College Rankings"), the nation's best schools do a lousy job when it comes to directing their students towards community or military service. Too often, top students fall into high-status holding patterns — two years on Wall Street that'll fill in time and resume space before applying to grad school. Short of a draft, how do you get the best and the brightest to serve their country?

Wendy Kopp, Teach for America's founder, seems to have figured out the answer. TFA enlists college graduates to spend two years teaching in low-income, low-performing schools for about $40,000 a year. Its stated mission is to "eliminate educational inequity by enlisting our nation's most promising future leaders in the effort." Like McKinsey in the 1990s, TFA has become a premium destination for elite students. Since 2000, its enrollment has tripled and its applicant pool has more than quadrupled. This year, 2,400 "corps members" will fan out into struggling schools across America. They'll be propelled not just by the program's earnest aims, but because TFA satisfies one of the Organization Kid's most primal needs: prestige. Kopp has harnessed the culture of status-seeking to a greater purpose and turned national service into a resume-builder.

Kopp proposed the program in her 1989 Princeton senior thesis. At the time, according to her 2001 memoir, she was half-heartedly pursuing a job at Morgan Stanley. Her friends were headed to Wall Street because "they just couldn't think of anything else to do." So Kopp, who had managed a $1.5 million student group that organized conferences with corporate leaders, wrote to the CEOs of 30 major companies seeking money for her "movement." But money alone doesn't buy status. Kopp knew the only way to attract elite students was to "counteract teaching's image as a 'soft' and downwardly mobile career." "[O]ur goal was to appear selective," she wrote. In 1996, six years after the program launched, she told *The New York Times*: "I'd like people to someday talk about TFA the way they talk about the Rhodes Scholarship."

Teach for America recruits like a white-shoe investment bank. At schools across the country, it pays two or three "campus campaign managers"—seniors who hype TFA to their peers and scout for promising student leaders. The program also buys slick ads in campus newspapers. Perhaps because TFA rejects 80 percent of applicants (this year, there were a record 19,000), the survivors resemble prototypical overachievers. Their average SAT score is more than 1300; 95 percent have held campus leadership roles. Top feeders include Amherst, Columbia, Dartmouth, and Duke; in 2005, 10.4 percent of Yale seniors applied.

There are disadvantages to running a teaching corps like a two-year analyst program at McKinsey. In 2005, The Teacher Policy Research project found that, in New York City, teachers truly hit their stride after three years. Unfortunately, only 28 percent of TFA teachers stay that long (a lower percentage than other teachers, even after adjusting for school quality). Nevertheless, overall, TFA teachers perform as well as their non-corps counterparts in most areas and beat them in others (predictably, they always ace the certification test). In 2000, 92 percent of principals who had hired TFA students said that they'd welcome them back.

Some cities also offer teaching fellows programs, focused more on recruiting career teachers. But TFA remains the Harvard of national service. (Corps members I met talked about New York Teaching Fellows as a "great program!" in the same way Ivy Leaguers describe the University of Maryland as a "great school!") Like any true elite institution, TFA's prestige has become self-sustaining. Its alumni network attracts more members, and its reputation opens more doors. Top grad schools, like Yale's School of Management, waive the application fee for TFA alums, while blue chip banks like Goldman Sachs recruit teachers at the end of their two-year stints. One alum told me that he was drawn to the program for "its networks inside and outside education."

Kopp, perhaps the ultimate Organization Kid, has devised a win-win-win situation. The prevailing problem in American schools isn't a shortage of teachers, but a shortage of teachers in poor communities. TFA's genius is that kids in understaffed schools benefit from their TFA instructors, while the mostly middle-class corps of teachers help kids whose backgrounds are very different from their own. Even if corps members only stay for two years on their way to law school, they've rendered a far more useful service to the nation than running spreadsheets for Bank of America. And as any savvy student will tell you, Teach for America looks fantastic on your resume.

– **Avi Zenilman** is a writer in New York.

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NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES

	OVERALL SCORE	SOCIAL MOBILITY			RESEARCH			SERVICE		
		% students receiving Pell grants	Predicted/actual grad rate based on % of Pell recipients and incoming SATs	Difference between predicted/ actual grad rates (rank)	Research grant $ in millions (rank)	Bachelor's to P.h.D. rank	P.h.D.'s awarded (rank)	Peace Corps rank	ROTC rank	% of federal work-study funds spent on service (rank)
191. State University of New York, Albany* - NY (132)	23	14	57/63	6 (71)	121 (91)	50	117 (74)	133	13	10 (182)
192. St. Louis University - MO (175)	22	12	68/74	6 (65)	41 (141)	148	52 (128)	121	159	14 (117)
193. University of Central Florida* - FL (166)	22	23	59/55	-4 (176)	90 (108)	220	75 (105)	218	156	16 (102)
194. Western Michigan University* - MI (197)	21	21	50/55	5 (72)	22 (173)	176	49 (132)	110	125	10 (186)
195. New Jersey Institute of Technology* - NJ (215)	21	28	57/53	-4 (173)	74 (114)	215	68 (111)	201	159	14 (118)
196. U. of North Carolina, Greensboro* - NC (218)	21	32	48/50	2 (112)	3 (213)	151	16 (199)	161	159	10 (191)
197. Pace University - NY (184)	21	30	52/59	7 (50)	0 (231)	229	0 (234)	220	159	9 (198)
198. Texas Tech University* - TX (196)	21	21	59/54	-5 (174)	93 (104)	162	87 (99)	162	147	13 (134)
199. George Mason University* - VA (159)	21	19	56/53	-3 (168)	45 (132)	230	112 (76)	145	94	12 (150)
200. Yeshiva University - NY (102)	21	12	69/55	-14 (228)	177 (71)	75	66 (112)	233	159	33 (16)
201. University of Louisville* - KY (193)	21	24	59/33	-26 (244)	89 (109)	178	56 (120)	195	96	32 (18)
202. Andrews University - MI (189)	21	38	47/38	-9 (207)	0 (231)	31	8 (218)	233	159	12 (163)
203. State University of New York, Buffalo - NY (98)	20	14	61/60	-1 (156)	240 (54)	89	154 (52)	137	159	8 (210)
204. Wayne State University* - MI (144)	20	33	37/32	-5 (183)	214 (59)	240	121 (71)	190	159	15 (109)
205. Wright State University* - OH (191)	20	31	43/41	-2 (166)	35 (150)	171	15 (200)	219	110	13 (140)
206. Georgia State University* - GA (230)	20	34	52/41	-11 (215)	46 (131)	216	49 (132)	171	157	13 (146)
207. Adelphi University - NY (212)	20	25	56/53	-3 (165)	0 (231)	121	25 (170)	188	159	17 (91)
208. University of Houston* - TX (145)	20	34	50/39	-11 (216)	63 (119)	188	110 (80)	203	155	11 (169)
209. East Tennessee State University* - TN (207)	20	36	46/38	-8 (198)	13 (186)	233	0 (234)	212	113	12 (148)
210. Idaho State University* - ID (214)	19	54	45/21	-24 (242)	12 (192)	197	14 (202)	205	159	11 (168)
211. Ball State University* - IN (228)	19	23	49/52	3 (88)	4 (210)	214	18 (190)	141	146	13 (143)
212. University of St. Thomas - MN (176)	19	15	63/71	8 (36)	0 (231)	182	1 (230)	99	159	7 (232)
213. University of Maryland, Baltimore County* - MD (139)	19	21	67/55	-12 (223)	43 (138)	185	59 (117)	125	159	18 (85)
214. Drexel University - PA (185)	18	17	65/57	-8 (195)	70 (116)	219	86 (100)	128	81	8 (223)
215. Cleveland State University* - OH (238)	17	41	39/27	-12 (217)	14 (183)	190	30 (161)	176	159	15 (110)
216. Middle Tennessee University* - TN (208)	17	28	52/40	-12 (220)	2 (221)	228	4 (224)	189	121	20 (66)
217. SUNY Coll. of Environ. Sci. and Forestry* - NY (113)	17	14	65/65	0 (134)	27 (163)	241	23 (178)	101	159	15 (112)
218. Indiana-Purdue University, Indianopolis* - IN (210)	17	31	43/22	-21 (240)	0 (231)	235	0 (234)	208	131	34 (14)
219. Wilmington College - DE (**)	16	22	42/49	7 (48)	0 (231)	241	0 (234)	222	159	21 (55)
220. University of North Texas* - TX (220)	15	26	55/40	-15 (234)	14 (184)	205	69 (109)	194	159	23 (48)
221. Virginia Commonwealth University* - VA (200)	15	24	52/40	-12 (219)	126 (87)	207	69 (109)	142	159	17 (92)
222. University of Texas, Arlington* - TX (226)	15	30	49/38	-11 (214)	15 (179)	222	42 (143)	193	78	8 (214)
223. SUNY, Stonybrook* - NY (97)	15	14	65/58	-7 (194)	200 (63)	117	167 (47)	228	159	8 (213)
224. University of Missouri, Kansas City* - MO (219)	15	25	63/44	-19 (238)	31 (153)	198	30 (161)	116	159	18 (84)
225. Indiana State University* - IN (239)	15	31	37/40	3 (93)	1 (225)	209	12 (208)	192	159	10 (175)
226. Northeastern University - MA (204)	14	14	70/60	-10 (211)	43 (137)	217	56 (120)	181	115	11 (171)
227. University of Massachusetts, Boston* - MA (231)	12	29	47/28	-19 (239)	16 (177)	157	15 (200)	168	159	25 (39)
228. New School University - NY (201)	11	21	65/61	-4 (177)	3 (214)	241	50 (130)	225	159	7 (238)
229. University of Texas, Dallas* - TX (229)	11	25	70/56	-14 (229)	31 (154)	200	43 (142)	231	159	6 (240)
230. Portland State University* - OR (223)	11	34	48/34	-14 (231)	21 (174)	234	14 (202)	135	159	8 (209)
231. University of Alabama, Huntsville* - AL (211)	11	26	60/45	-15 (235)	47 (130)	224	31 (159)	233	159	16 (106)
232. University of Northern Colorado* - CO (216)	11	20	51/45	-6 (184)	2 (220)	193	10 (213)	118	159	15 (113)
233. Wichita State University* - KS (237)	10	31	51/37	-14 (230)	22 (172)	210	23 (178)	216	159	11 (170)
234. University of Nevada, Reno* - NV (221)	10	15	52/49	-3 (167)	81 (112)	161	62 (113)	140	159	12 (153)
235. New Mexico Inst. of Mining and Tech.* - NM (236)	10	24	70/38	-32 (245)	37 (136)	47	10 (213)	50	159	9 (195)

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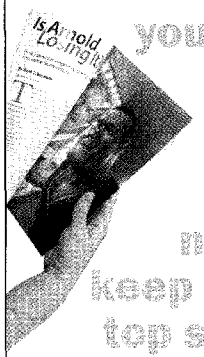
		% students receiving Pell grants	Predicted/actual grad rate based on % of Pell recipients and incoming SATs	Difference between predicted/ actual grad rates (rank)	Research grant $ in millions (rank)	Bachelor's to P.h.D. rank	P.h.D.'s awarded (rank)	Peace Corps rank	ROTC rank	% of federal work-study funds spent on service (rank)
236. University of Massachusetts, Lowell* - MA (240)	9	18	55/46	-9 (208)	23 (170)	206	25 (170)	184	159	18 (86)
237. University of Hartford - CT (235)	8	16	53/53	0 (131)	1 (226)	201	0 (234)	153	159	10 (180)
238. University of Missouri, St. Louis* - MO (245)	8	24	55/45	-10 (210)	13 (187)	225	23 (178)	154	159	9 (196)
239. University of New Orleans* - LA (241)	8	39	46/25	-21 (241)	0 (231)	168	35 (154)	166	159	6 (241)
240. Florida Atlantic University* - FL (232)	7	28	49/37	-12 (222)	26 (164)	212	21 (182)	199	159	10 (188)
241. U. of Colorado, Denver & Health Sci. Ctr.* - CO (224)	6	22	54/39	-15 (233)	5 (106)	238	34 (156)	119	159	14 (120)
242. University of Louisiana, Lafayette* - LA (242)	6	33	44/32	-12 (218)	44 (135)	241	17 (195)	233	159	7 (234)
243. University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee* - WI (233)	5	23	55/37	-18 (237)	27 (161)	202	39 (147)	180	159	13 (141)
244. Oakland University* - MI (243)	4	17	46/47	1 (133)	6 (204)	223	18 (190)	213	159	9 (197)
245. University of Alaska, Fairbanks* - AK (227)	0	18	49/25	-24 (243)	129 (85)	231	18 (190)	173	82	13 (142)

FOOTNOTES

For schools where SAT scores were unavailable, we used ACT scores to derive an analogous substitute. This was done for the following schools: Alabama A&M University, Illinois State University, Jackson State University (Mississippi), Kansas State University, Louisiana Tech University, Mississippi State University, National-Louis University (Illinois), New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, New Mexico State University, The New School (New York), North Dakota State University, Northern Illinois University, Oakland University, South Dakota State University, University of Alabama, Birmingham, University of Arkansas, Little Rock, University of Illinois, Chicago, University of Kansas, University of Louisiana, Lafayette, University of North Dakota, University of Oklahoma, Wayne State University (Michigan), Western Michigan University. For the State University of New York, Rutgers of New Jersey, and Antioch University (which has six campuses spread across four states) our Pell numbers were for the entire school system as opposed to individual schools or campuses.

—The Editors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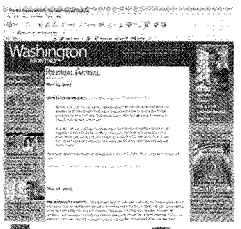
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LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

Overall Score: Overall score represents the combined score of our three metrics—social mobility, research, and service—where the highest is 100 and the lowest is zero. Each individual metric is worth 33 and a third total points.

Social Mobility: The first column shows the percentage of students receiving Pell grants. The second shows predicted rate of graduation, based on incoming SAT scores and Pell grant percentages, versus the actual rate of graduation. The third shows the difference between the actual graduation rate and the predicted graduation rate—a measure of how well the school performs as an engine of social mobility (see "A Note on Methodology," p. 25)—arrived at by subtracting the latter from the former. (The higher the number, the better; negative numbers indicate sub par performance.) Rank follows in parentheses.

Research: The first column shows the number of dollars (in thousands) received from the federal government in research grants. Rank follows in parentheses. The second shows the school's ranking in the number of Bachelor's recipients who go on to receive PhDs. The third ranks the school by number of PhDs awarded.

Service: The first column ranks the school by percentage of students who go on to serve in the Peace Corps. The second column ranks the school by percentage of students who serve in ROTC. The third gives the percentage of funds in federal work-study money that goes to community service (versus non-community service); rank follows in parentheses.

		SOCIAL MOBILITY			RESEARCH		SERVICE		
	OVERALL SCORE	% students receiving Pell grants	Predicted/actual grad rate based on % of Pell recipients and incoming SATs	Difference between predicted/actual grad rates (rank)	Research grant $ in thousands (rank)	Bachelor's to P.h.D. rank	Peace Corps rank	ROTC rank	% of federal work-study funds spent on service (rank)
1. Bryn Mawr College - PA (3)	100	16	78/83	5 (60)	4705 (5)	14	4	16	28 (16)
2. Wellesley College - MA (1)	95	17	85/91	6 (44)	5733 (3)	9	16	16	14 (71)
3. Wesleyan University - CT (2)	89	13	86/92	6 (48)	6682 (2)	13	9	16	10 (125)
4. Haverford College - PA (7)	88	11	86/90	4 (59)	1428 (32)	10	50	16	45 (2)
5. Amherst College - MA (6)	88	14	90/96	6 (54)	2115 (17)	8	23	16	15 (61)
6. Mount Holyoke College - MA (11)	85	21	78/78	0 (108)	3174 (7)	17	8	16	21 (32)
7. Claremont McKenna College - CA (24)	84	13	85/91	6 (47)	0 (68)	73	21	4	14 (62)
8. Williams College - MA (14)	83	11	89/96	7 (34)	3295 (6)	3	89	16	13 (95)
9. Whitman College - WA (23)	81	11	83/83	0 (110)	619 (49)	26	3	16	35 (5)
10. Swarthmore College - PA (21)	80	12	90/91	1 (98)	1717 (24)	1	40	16	13 (80)
11. Wheaton College - IL (48)	80	15	81/84	3 (84)	0 (68)	30	76	5	25 (21)
12. Carleton College - MN (30)	80	11	88/90	2 (96)	1965 (22)	7	15	16	10 (125)
13. Oberlin College - OH (37)	78	15	82/79	-3 (138)	471 (56)	5	30	16	26 (19)
14. Grinnell College - IA (25)	78	13	85/88	3 (76)	977 (41)	12	2	16	7 (192)
15. Pomona College - CA (36)	77	11	91/90	-1 (123)	1962 (23)	4	32	16	8 (156)
16. Smith College - MA (33)	76	26	73/84	11 (14)	2194 (14)	15	82	16	15 (60)
17. Harvey Mudd College - CA (4)	73	12	94/85	-9 (174)	7997 (1)	6	176	16	15 (58)
18. Tougaloo College - MS (**)	70	76	31/49	18 (3)	851 (45)	27	176	16	8 (166)
19. Bowdoin College - ME (35)	69	12	86/89	3 (83)	1673 (25)	19	6	16	8 (163)
20. Middlebury College - VT (17)	68	10	86/90	4 (70)	1587 (26)	43	13	16	20 (37)
21. Presbyterian College - SC (13)	67	14	66/76	10 (21)	0 (68)	151	161	2	21 (35)
22. Spelman College - GA (10)	66	38	56/77	21 (1)	2298 (13)	51	101	16	7 (175)
23. Knox College - IL (46)	66	22	72/79	7 (36)	0 (68)	55	51	16	32 (8)
24. Reed College - OR (59)	65	17	83/70	-13 (186)	1129 (38)	2	48	16	14 (67)
25. Colorado College - CO (26)	65	13	80/84	4 (62)	1318 (35)	46	7	16	17 (49)
26. Bates College - ME (22)	65	9	84/84	0 (109)	1340 (34)	21	27	16	23 (24)
27. Fisk University - TN (5)	64	52	43/64	21 (2)	3000 (8)	110	148	16	6 (197)
28. Macalaster College - MN (16)	63	12	83/81	-2 (131)	2091 (18)	18	12	16	8 (161)
29. Wofford College - MA (8)	63	16	74/80	6 (52)	0 (68)	108	159	3	13 (77)
30. Wells College - NY (72)	62	45	55/67	12 (11)	0 (68)	105	49	16	14 (69)
31. Barnard College - NY (18)	62	18	83/89	6 (43)	116 (28)	37	81	16	14 (73)
32. Bucknell University - PA (20)	61	11	80/89	9 (26)	2123 (16)	41	94	13	12 (100)
33. Occidental College - CA (19)	61	23	76/75	-1 (124)	2633 (11)	33	73	16	14 (66)
34. Virginia Military Institute* - VA (12)	61	14	68/62	-6 (160)	0 (68)	148	91	1	10 (137)
35. Hobart and William Smith Colleges - NY (79)	60	20	67/78	11 (17)	0 (68)	99	42	16	32 (7)
36. Mills College - CA (102)	60	41	60/65	5 (56)	0 (68)	38	105	16	16 (51)
37. Furman University - SC (15)	59	9	80/84	4 (66)	1136 (37)	65	97	14	27 (17)
38. St. Augustine's College - NC (84)	58	73	27/37	10 (20)	0 (68)	186	176	8	10 (128)
39. Washington and Lee University - VA (32)	58	4	88/90	2 (88)	0 (68)	81	58	16	39 (4)
40. Hendrix College - AR (134)	58	21	74/68	-6 (162)	0 (68)	11	70	16	18 (43)
41. Earlham College - IN (109)	57	22	71/72	1 (102)	0 (68)	16	65	16	17 (46)
42. Vasser College - NY (58)	57	11	87/86	-1 (116)	2130 (15)	31	77	16	14 (65)
43. University of Judaism - CA (**)	56	36	57/72	15 (7)	0 (68)	190	24	16	18 (42)
44. Agnes Scott College - GA (70)	56	30	68/72	4 (75)	0 (68)	89	68	16	23 (25)
45. Connecticut College - CT (43)	56	10	82/86	4 (64)	593 (50)	69	18	16	18 (40)

Schools' ranking last year in parentheses.
* Public University
** Not ranked last year

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46. Colby College - ME (9)	56	8	85/88	3 (79)	1294 (86)	106	41	16	25 (22)
47. Evergreen State College* - WA (50)	55	40	58/52	-6 (164)	511 (53)	143	53	16	29 (14)
48. Antioch College - OH (110)	54	51	62/59	-3 (146)	0 (68)	190	67	16	15 (57)
49. St. Olaf College - MN (38)	54	14	77/84	7 (39)	710 (46)	34	31	16	9 (144)
50. Dickinson College - PA (31)	54	11	79/80	1 (97)	1550 (27)	93	62	10	11 (122)
51. St. John's College - MD (51)	53	22	80/71	-9 (173)	0 (68)	20	36	16	11 (119)
52. Hamilton College - NY (29)	53	13	83/86	3 (82)	1459 (30)	47	60	16	13 (93)
53. Kalamazoo College - MI (77)	52	9	81/77	-4 (142)	0 (68)	24	1	16	8 (164)
54. Albertson College - ID (176)	50	28	65/56	-9 (169)	0 (68)	90	14	16	23 (26)
55. Ripon College - WI (142)	50	25	62/75	13 (13)	0 (68)	94	34	16	12 (105)
56. Beloit College - WI (68)	50	16	75/70	-5 (153)	0 (68)	48	5	16	13 (90)
57. Davidson College - NC (67)	50	8	85/91	6 (45)	0 (68)	28	43	16	9 (154)
58. Pine Manor College - MA (53)	50	58	31/40	9 (22)	0 (68)	190	176	16	32 (9)
59. Bethel College - TN (173)	50	76	35/39	4 (68)	0 (68)	118	176	16	7 (185)
60. University of Richmond - VA (**)	49	7	82/85	3 (78)	1470 (29)	107	84	12	13 (76)
61. Lewis and Clark College - OR (39)	49	17	77/67	-10 (178)	622 (48)	111	11	16	21 (30)
62. St. John's University - MN (61)	49	15	71/82	11 (18)	0 (68)	112	104	6	8 (160)
63. College of the Holy Cross - MA (44)	48	10	77/90	13 (10)	490 (54)	62	152	9	10 (140)
64. Talladega College - AL (62)	48	78	22/33	11 (16)	71 (67)	98	176	16	10 (136)
65. Southwestern University - TX (73)	48	16	75/75	0 (112)	0 (68)	61	55	16	22 (29)
66. Randolph-Macon College - VA (93)	48	28	65/61	-4 (149)	0 (68)	84	28	16	18 (44)
67. Colgate University - NY (41)	48	10	84/89	5 (57)	1425 (33)	88	64	16	12 (111)
68. Union College - NY (42)	48	14	75/88	13 (9)	2086 (19)	56	140	16	7 (179)
69. Guilford College - NC (139)	48	41	59/68	9 (23)	0 (68)	169	80	16	9 (145)
70. Bennett College** - NC	47	67	26/37	11 (15)	0 (68)	101	176	16	10 (138)
71. University of the South, Sewanee - TN (78)	47	12	75/79	4 (77)	0 (68)	63	17	16	13 (82)
72. Hampshire College - MA (49)	47	18	75/63	-12 (182)	2754 (9)	54	75	16	18 (141)
73. Franklin Pierce College - NH (128)	46	44	45/45	0 (114)	0 (68)	190	170	16	45 (3)
74. Hiram College - OH (136)	46	34	59/65	6 (38)	0 (68)	115	37	16	7 (181)
75. College of Saint Benedict - MN (55)	46	17	67/82	15 (6)	0 (68)	132	69	16	20 (38)
76. Lyon College - AR (177)	46	44	62/63	1 (105)	0 (68)	175	176	16	17 (47)
77. Morehouse College - GA (**)	46	34	54/50	-4 (150)	2410 (12)	10	107	15	11 (121)
78. Kenyon College - OH (63)	45	7	83/84	1 (103)	0 (68)	25	29	16	9 (149)
79. Eckerd College - FL (75)	45	30	61/65	4 (72)	0 (68)	97	25	16	7 (189)
80. Juniatia College - PA (82)	44	23	67/74	7 (35)	530 (52)	67	139	16	16 (53)
81. Williamette University - OR (40)	44	20	72/71	-1 (119)	276 (6)	117	20	16	11 (115)
82. Lawrence University - WI (113)	44	19	77/73	-4 (144)	0 (68)	32	78	16	12 (104)
83. Bennington College - VT (96)	44	25	71/66	-5 (154)	0 (68)	50	35	16	8 (165)
84. Stevens College - MO (125)	44	28	60/57	-3 (137)	0 (68)	102	54	16	24 (23)
85. Wesleyan College - GA (161)	43	40	57/47	-10 (176)	0 (68)	76	132	16	23 (27)
86. Siena College - NY (34)	43	19	64/77	13 (8)	0 (68)	155	171	11	13 (94)
87. Shawnee College* - OH (127)	43	57	40/30	-10 (177)	0 (68)	185	176	16	32 (6)
88. Trinity College - CT (80)	42	13	80/87	7 (31)	856 (44)	75	113	16	9 (152)
89. College of the Atlantic - ME (27)	42	28	67/47	-20 (197)	0 (68)	23	22	16	13 (90)
90. Luther College - IA (64)	42	20	71/76	5 (58)	0 (68)	104	47	16	10 (133)
91. Pitzer College - CA (74)	41	16	73/71	-2 (139)	343 (58)	36	33	16	7 (192)
92. Salem College - NC (85)	41	45	56/51	-5 (157)	0 (68)	159	83	16	13 (79)
93. Skidmore College - NY (54)	41	13	75/85	10 (19)	632 (47)	122	71	16	11 (123)
94. Erskine College - FL (98)	41	27	61/68	7 (33)	0 (68)	49	136	16	12 (114)
95. University of Puget Sound - WA (57)	40	14	75/74	-1 (121)	0 (68)	83	10	16	7 (172)

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96. Ohio Wesleyan University - OH (76)	40	18	72/61	-11 (179)	284 (60)	87	79	16	29 (15)
97. Franklin and Marshall - PA (52)	40	9	78/82	4 (71)	1028 (40)	29	176	16	14 (69)
98. Lafayette College - PA (47)	40	9	78/86	8 (28)	2065 (20)	113	116	16	10 (139)
99. College of Wooster - OH (90)	40	14	73/68	-5 (155)	413 (57)	22	26	16	5 (199)
100. Hollins University - VA (94)	40	33	60/61	1 (101)	0 (68)	95	106	16	12 (103)
101. Houghton College - NY (88)	39	34	63/67	4 (65)	0 (68)	120	119	16	7 (173)
102. St. Lawrence University - NY (101)	39	19	66/75	9 (24)	0 (68)	79	85	16	12 (99)
103. Warner Pacific College - OR (**)	39	51	47/49	2 (87)	0 (68)	190	123	16	111 (123)
104. Denison University - OH (91)	39	12	75/77	2 (95)	546 (51)	60	59	16	11 (117)
105. Bethany College - WV (60)	39	32	49/67	18 (4)	0 (68)	156	110	16	12 (101)
106. Concordia College, Moorhead - MN (89)	39	22	63/65	2 (81)	0 (68)	135	63	16	21 (36)
107. Alma College - MI (99)	38	27	65/71	6 (55)	0 (68)	58	137	16	6 (196)
108. Olivet College - MI (185)	38	51	30/37	7 (30)	0 (68)	174	176	16	25 (20)
109. Paine College - GA (159)	38	73	26/30	4 (73)	0 (68)	170	176	16	7 (173)
110. St. Mary's College of Maryland* - MD (56)	38	12	74/76	2 (159)	355 (159)	123	39	16	14 (68)
111. Austin College - TX (100)	38	23	73/74	1 (99)	0 (68)	72	111	16	7 (181)
112. Millsaps College - MS (115)	37	24	69/69	0 (113)	0 (68)	70	157	16	14 (63)
113. Allegheny College - PA (65)	37	21	72/66	-6 (158)	974 (42)	66	121	16	13 (85)
114. California State University, Monterey Bay - CA (112)	37	38	50/36	-14 (187)	2644 (10)	190	160	16	29 (13)
115. Oglethorpe University - GA (150)	37	30	59/56	-3 (140)	0 (68)	40	120	16	13 (97)
116. Lane College - TN (45)	36	87	26/28	2 (94)	0 (68)	183	176	16	7 (189)
117. Huntingdon College - AL (131)	36	33	51/58	7 (40)	0 (68)	121	102	16	12 (107)
118. Wittenberg University - OH (87)	36	20	64/65	1 (104)	0 (68)	57	66	16	11 (118)
119. Rhodes College -TN (156)	36	10	77/83	6 (50)	0 (68)	92	44	16	7 (171)
120. Albion College - MI (129)	35	17	68/71	3 (80)	0 (68)	59	87	16	12 (113)
121. Washington and Jefferson College - PA (81)	35	20	65/64	-1 (117)	0 (68)	114	176	16	27 (18)
122. Schreiner University - TX (174)	35	54	45/41	-4 (145)	0 (68)	179	176	16	13 (89)
123. Ursinus College - PA (104)	35	21	71/78	7 (32)	0 (68)	100	142	16	7 (180)
124. Hartwick College - NY (92)	35	28	62/54	-8 (168)	221 (64)	91	141	16	21 (31)
125. Depauw University - IN (108)	35	11	74/75	1 (93)	0 (68)	77	38	16	9 (155)
126. Goshen College - IN (97)	35	24	63/69	6 (46)	0 (68)	78	115	16	8 (169)
127. Lycoming College - PA (122)	35	25	60/64	4 (63)	0 (68)	158	143	16	23 (28)
128. St. Vincent College - PA (132)	35	23	59/67	8 (27)	0 (68)	127	167	16	21 (34)
129. Gustavus Adolphus College - MN (83)	35	16	74/71	-3 (141)	0 (68)	52	57	16	7 (183)
130. Coe College - IA (105)	35	26	67/65	-2 (130)	0 (68)	45	176	16	10 (134)
131. Hope College - MI (69)	34	14	74/73	-1 (120)	1457 (31)	86	88	16	7 (177)
132. Westminster College - PA (95)	34	22	59/76	17 (5)	0 (68)	149	128	16	11 (120)
133. Wabash College - IN (144)	34	20	69/68	-1 (122)	0 (68)	35	56	16	0 (201)
134. Scripps College - CA (71)	34	14	83/74	-9 (171)	0 (68)	80	52	16	9 (150)
135. University of Dallas - TX (167)	34	18	73/75	2 (85)	97 (66)	53	158	16	8 (162)
136. Centre College - KY (133)	34	14	76/80	4 (69)	0 (68)	52	127	16	4 (200)
137. St. John's College - NM (67)	34	31	76/54	-22 (199)	0 (68)	39	108	16	7 (178)
138. Virginia Union University - VA (189)	33	57	25/32	7 (41)	0 (68)	126	166	16	10 (142)
139. Sarah Lawrence - NY (130)	33	12	77/74	-3 (136)	0 (68)	68	109	16	15 (59)
140. Lees-McRae College - NC (143)	32	35	50/39	-11 (181)	0 (68)	181	176	16	52 (1)

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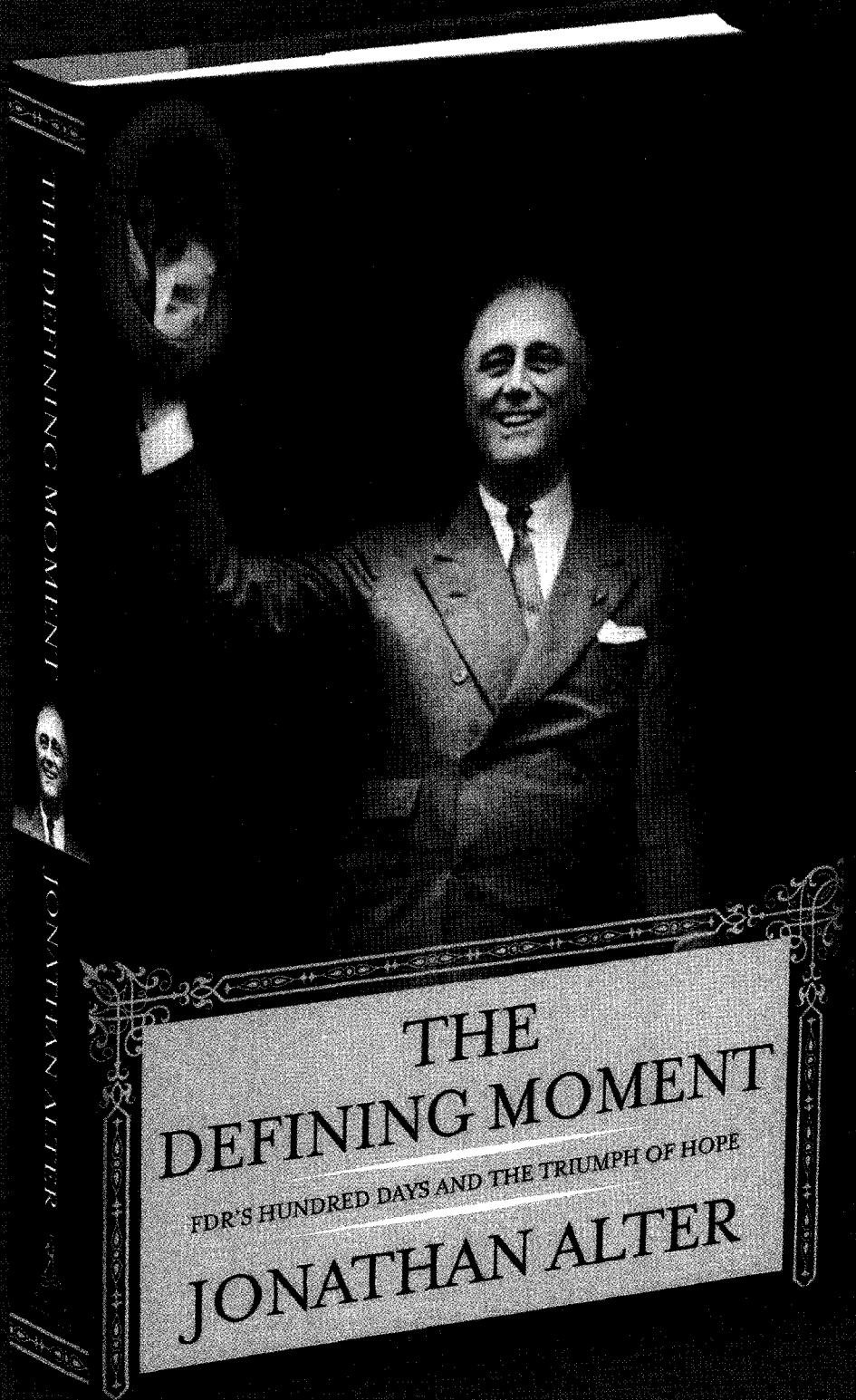

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141. Augustana College - IL (124)	32	16	71/75	4 (67)	212 (65)	124	144	16	13 (83)
142. Gordon College - MA (145)	31	21	70/66	-4 (147)	0 (68)	141	44	16	8 (159)
143. Drew University - NJ (137)	31	15	71/73	2 (92)	0 (68)	44	129	16	8 (157)
144. Chatham College - PA (144)	30	28	56/54	-2 (127)	0 (68)	74	138	16	14 (74)
145. Cornell College - IA (118)	30	25	71/65	-6 (161)	0 (68)	119	131	16	10 (135)
146. Lake Forest College - IL (120)	30	24	67/60	-7 (165)	271 (62)	139	95	16	14 (72)
147. Eastern Mennonite University - VA (171)	30	26	61/60	-1 (125)	0 (68)	103	93	16	9 (143)
148. Birmingham Southern College - AL (86)	30	13	72/70	-2 (126)	0 (68)	82	114	16	16 (50)
149. Hastings College - NE (106)	30	30	57/62	5 (53)	0 (68)	176	103	16	9 (148)
150. Bard College - NY (160)	29	15	80/69	-11 (180)	0 (68)	96	99	16	14 (64)
151. Westmont College - CA (123)	29	12	87/70	-17 (195)	0 (68)	71	92	16	12 (102)
152. University of Hawaii, Hilo* - HI (**)	29	40	47/30	-17 (193)	5317 (4)	184	149	16	12 (109)
153. Illinois Wesleyan University - IL (172)	29	10	79/81	2 (91)	0 (68)	64	173	16	10 (141)
154. McDaniel College - MD (107)	28	17	64/70	6 (42)	0 (68)	190	176	7	7 (192)
155. Wheaton College - MA (147)	28	15	76/72	-4 (143)	0 (68)	125	86	16	9 (146)
156. Gettysburg College - PA (140)	28	12	77/77	0 (115)	0 (68)	137	96	16	10 (130)
157. Susquehanna University - PA (126)	28	15	67/76	9 (25)	0 (68)	157	125	16	12 (112)
158. Sweet Briar College - VA (141)	27	12	67/67	0 (107)	0 (68)	131	19	16	7 (189)
159. Goucher College - MD (103)	27	14	72/63	-9 (170)	0 (68)	85	61	16	13 (84)
160. Nebraska Wesleyan University - NA (135)	27	25	59/63	4 (74)	0 (68)	140	100	16	7 (187)
161. Marlboro College - VT (178)	27	32	67/49	-18 (196)	0 (68)	128	98	16	12 (106)
162. Albright College - PA (114)	27	27	56/58	2 (89)	0 (68)	146	156	16	16 (52)
163. Muskingum College - OH (154)	27	30	53/61	8 (29)	0 (68)	150	151	16	7 (187)
164. Transylvania University - KY (162)	26	19	68/64	-4 (151)	0 (68)	116	130	16	13 (81)
165. Whittier College - CA (149)	26	28	57/55	-2 (132)	0 (68)	153	163	16	15 (56)
166. West Virginia Wesleyan College - WV (165)	26	28	55/54	-1 (118)	0 (68)	152	122	16	14 (75)
167. St. Anselm College - NH (151)	25	15	64/77	13 (68)	0 (68)	130	155	16	8 (170)
168. Monmouth College - IL (146)	25	30	62/59	-3 (134)	0 (68)	144	176	16	9 (151)
169. Hampden-Sydney College - VA (153)	25	10	69/68	-1 (128)	0 (68)	145	46	16	12 (98)
170. Georgetown College - KY (181)	25	22	59/61	2 (86)	0 (68)	147	164	16	15 (54)
171. Roanoke College - VA (119)	24	19	64/61	-3 (135)	476 (55)	165	72	16	12 (108)
172. Emory and Henry College - VA (148)	24	29	55/51	-4 (152)	0 (68)	134	117	16	12 (110)
173. Richard Stockton College of New Jersey - NJ (152)	24	24	62/64	2 (90)	0 (68)	163	174	16	11 (116)
174. Mesa State College* - CO (191)	24	37	47/30	-17 (194)	0 (68)	187	146	16	30 (12)
175. Adrian College - MI (195)	23	33	50/47	-3 (140)	0 (68)	138	154	16	13 (96)
176. University of Minnesota, Morris* - MN (117)	23	25	65/52	-13 (185)	0 (68)	142	153	16	18 (39)
177. Seton Hill University - PA (179)	23	34	51/49	-2 (133)	0 (68)	173	165	16	13 (90)
178. St. Andrews Presbyterian College - NC (200)	23	32	54/34	-20 (198)	0 (68)	133	176	16	31 (10)
179. Muhlenberg College - PA (169)	23	6	76/82	6 (49)	0 (68)	136	150	16	10 (132)
180. Rosemont College - PA (138)	23	27	59/64	5 (51)	0 (68)	161	90	16	0 (201)
181. Judson College - AL (158)	22	42	55/39	-16 (191)	0 (68)	129	176	16	10 (127)
182. Lindsey Wilson College - KY (170)	22	63	35/19	-16 (192)	0 (68)	190	176	16	8 (166)
183. Coastal Carolina University* - SC (180)	21	31	54/40	-14 (188)	940 (43)	189	162	16	21 (33)
184. Bridgewater College - VA (175)	21	23	58/65	7 (37)	0 (68)	178	124	16	7 (183)
185. King College - TN (188)	21	35	53/54	1 (106)	0 (68)	190	176	16	7 (175)
186. William Jewell College - MO (186)	20	18	64/63	-1 (129)	0 (68)	154	147	16	13 (88)
187. Blackburn College - IL (184)	19	42	49/40	-9 (172)	0 (68)	190	135	16	7 (195)
188. Fort Lewis College* - CO (163)	19	28	53/30	-23 (201)	231 (63)	167	118	16	30 (11)
189. Greensboro College - NC (199)	18	32	50/44	-6 (159)	0 (68)	177	133	16	13 (86)
190. Moravian College - PA (121)	18	18	66/66	0 (111)	0 (68)	160	172	16	8 (158)

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191. San Diego Christian College - CA (**)	17	33	49/54	5 (61)	0 (68)	190	176	16	5 (198)
192. Washington College - MD (168)	17	8	69/63	-6 (166)	0 (68)	162	74	16	17 (45)
193. University of Virginia, Wise* - VA (166)	16	38	48/43	-5 (156)	0 (68)	190	176	16	10 (129)
194. University of North Carolina, Asheville* - NC (155)	16	23	68/52	-16 (190)	1108 (39)	171	134	16	7 (186)
195. Westminster College - MO (182)	14	24	60/52	-8 (167)	0 (68)	180	112	16	8 (168)
196. Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts* - MA (183)	14	32	54/45	-9 (175)	0 (68)	190	168	16	10 (131)
197. Marymount Manhattan College - NY (194)	11	23	58/45	-13 (184)	0 (68)	182	126	16	13 (78)
198. Christopher Newport University* - VA (197)	8	15	67/42	-25 (202)	2055 (21)	172	175	16	17 (48)
199. University of Maine, Presque Isle* - ME (190)	8	36	43/29	-14 (189)	0 (68)	188	176	16	15 (55)
200. Virginia Wesleyan College - VA (187)	5	25	54/42	-12 (183)	0 (68)	164	169	16	9 (153)
201. Randolph-Macon Woman's College - VA (111)	5	13	64/58	-6 (163)	0 (68)	166	176	16	9 (147)
202. Western State College of Colorado* - CO (193)	0	24	53/31	-22 (200)	0 (68)	168	145	16	13 (87)

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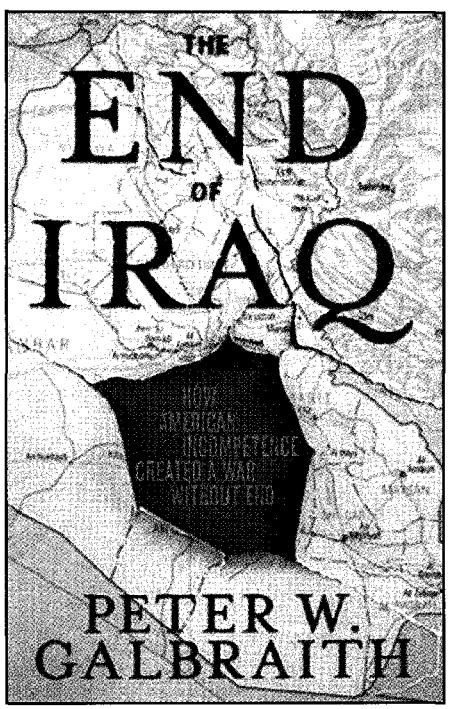
Kurdish Delight

A flawed case for an independent Kurdistan.

By Michael Hirsh

Criticizing George W. Bush for his mistakes in Iraq nowadays is the authorial equivalent of taking on the Washington Nationals. As a challenge, it's just too easy to be interesting, or sporting. While commentators still squabble over the details—which was worse, Rumsfeld's decision to put in too few troops or Bremer's decision to disband the Iraqi army? Yada yada yada—the disastrous errors made in invading and occupying Iraq are already confirmed historical fact. They are disputed by no responsible or knowledgeable person, outside of a small circle of Kool-Aid sippers in the White House. Some new books, like *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, by *The Washington Post*'s Thomas Ricks, have supplied a wealth of fascinating new detail, but for the most part, the critics have had their day.

Peter Galbraith, like others before him, dwells at great length on these mistakes in his new book, *The End of Iraq: How American Incompetence Created a War Without End.* But not surprisingly, he adds little to this discussion since he did not have a front-row seat either reporting or making policy in post-Saddam Iraq. For the most part, he rounds up the usual footnotes—the same articles in the same major media publications and books that are now trotted out for every critique of the Iraq war. Where Galbraith did have a front-row seat, however, was as an advocate for Kurdish interests. And what is distinctive about his book is that these interests clearly constitute his No. 1 agenda. *The End of Iraq* is basically an argument for the breakup of the country, as a means of giving his Kurdish friends their long-deferred dream, a state of their own.



The End of Iraq
By Peter W. Galbraith
Simon and Schuster, $26.00

Galbraith doesn't quite admit to this agenda, and in my view, that is the main problem with the book, which grew out of a series of long articles he wrote on the same theme for *The New York Review of Books*. He brings some important historical perspective to this argument: As an ambassador and official at the Dayton peace talks, he also had a first-hand view of the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, and he suggests that the dissolution of Iraq has the same kind of inevitability to it. Indeed, it will even be the most humane way out, he says, the only effective prophylactic against endless civil war.

But Galbraith's pro-Kurdish sympathies suffuse the book, and it seems a little too pat that his solution to the problem of Iraq aligns perfectly with the Kurds' longstanding national ambitions. These sympathies date back two decades to the mid-1980s, when, as a staffer on the Senate Foreign Relations committee, working for Sen. Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.), Galbraith visited Iraq on a fact-finding mission and stumbled on the Anfal, Saddam Hussein's military campaign to destroy rural life in Kurdistan as a means of exerting control. Then and later, he developed a special relationship with Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani, the current Iraqi president, who called Galbraith in Washington three days after Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 to ask him whether it "would be a good time" to visit the United States. "If there ever was interest in the Kurds, it was now," Galbraith says he advised him. "Of course you should come, I told him." Even while he was serving as ambassador to Croatia in the 1990s under Bill Clinton, he was working as an activist for the Kurdish cause. After fighting erupted between the two main Kurdish factions, another Kurdish leader, Massoud Barzani, asked Saddam to send troops into his region when he is being driven out by Talabani's forces. Galbraith says he phoned his Clinton administration colleagues from Zagreb to plead that Barzani's invitation [to Saddam], "while regrettable," should "not mean the end of

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Kurdish self-rule."

Galbraith is all the things a passionate advocate should be: brave, dedicated, smart, and aggressive to a fault. What he is not, it seems to me, is altogether intellectually honest about whether his Kurdish ties have skewed his overall view of the Iraq situation. It is not that Galbraith makes any attempt to hide his work as an advisor to the Kurds. Instead he seems to practice a studied disingenuousness on this score. At one point, he writes at length about the central role he played in formulating the Kurdish constitution. "About three weeks after Saddam's fall, I began discussions with the Kurdish leaders on the future of Kurdistan and what they might achieve in the new Iraq constitution," Galbraith writes. He then describes drafting an extensive memo in which he said that Kurdistan "should take the initiative by writing its own constitution before the Iraqi constitutional process began," so as to get the jump on autonomous rights, including its own self-defense force. "Iraq's Kurds will never reconcile to being part of Iraq," he writes later. Astonishingly, he continues to lay claim to objectivity, saying that "my views on the future of Iraq, however, are not based on sentiment or friendship." Nowhere does he forthrightly say he is working as an advocate for Kurdish interests, which in my view should disqualify him from writing a book that purports to be a dispassionate analysis of the Iraq problem.

The premise of the book is that Iraq will and must break up, which raises a question: If it was inevitable anyway, then how can you blame this outcome on the incompetence of the American occupation, which he details at great length? "Churchill considered the forced incorporation of the Kurds in Iraq as one of his biggest mistakes," he concludes. "It is perhaps fitting that it has been undone by an American president who keeps a bust of Churchill in the Oval Office." Churchill, Iraq, the whole future of the Mideast—it's always all about the Kurds for Galbraith. But in reality, it's not all about the Kurds—not even the future of Iraq.

Yes, the Kurds are natural objects of sympathy. Pragmatic, self-reliant, somewhat secular, they make natural allies for the United States. And yes, they've had a very bad century with their dreams betrayed repeatedly by U.S. policy-makers going back to Woodrow Wilson. And yes, the ethnic violence between Sunnis and Shiites has now gotten so bad that there's also a pretty fair chance Iraq will ultimately break up into regions, or worse, fracture into a failed state ruled by tribes, warlords and militias.

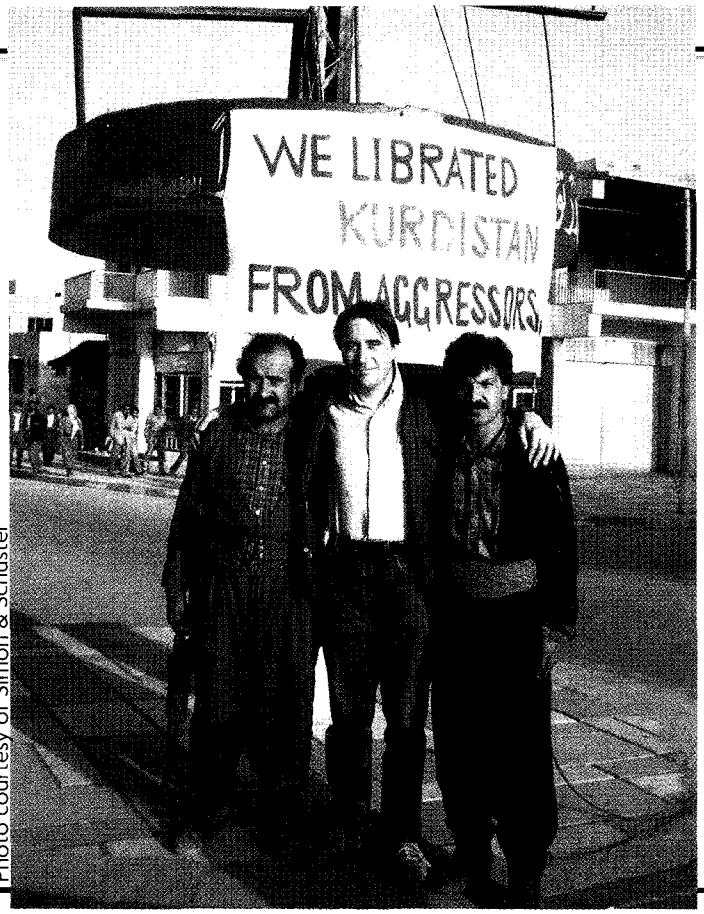

Photo courtesy of Simon & Schuster

Author Peter Galbraith in Zakho, Kurdistan in 1991.

No one seriously questions that Iraq is now fissuring, and that the American presence may be the only glue holding the country together. What is not clear is whether, if the country breaks up—even somewhat peacefully—the fracturing will simply stop at two or three regions, as Galbraith proposes. "You could have Iraq 1914," a U.S. military analyst told me during a visit to Iraq in April. He was referring to the old Mesopotamia that was organized around three major cities, Mosul, Baghdad, and Basra, before the British created Iraq out of whole cloth in the aftermath of World War I. The analyst added: "But you could also have Somalia in the 1990s." On the positive side, under the loose federalism created by the new constitution, there is still a possibility that the country could revert to the natural decentralization that once dominated Mesopotamia. As then-Iraqi Vice President Adel Abdel Mehdi told my colleagues at *Newsweek* a year ago, "The decentralized system worked here for thousands of years." Mehdi suggested that Iraq could even "be like the Arab Emirates—each state would have its own investment policy, its own costs, a combination of different models."

But none of these outcomes can be declared to be inevitable, even at this late stage, unless wishing makes them so. What observers like Galbraith—who draw a straight line from the history of a place to predicting its future—often miss are the new variables. And the biggest new variable in Iraq today is the U.S. presence, which is likely to continue for years. Indeed, it is ironic that Galbraith, who took part in the Dayton Peace Accords that have kept an ethnically and religiously riven Bosnia together—thanks to the presence of NATO troops—should discount the possibility that the same thing could happen in Iraq.

Michael Hirsh is a senior editor at *Newsweek* and author of *At War With Ourselves: Why America is Squandering Its Chance to Build a Better World.*

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Hero or Hack?

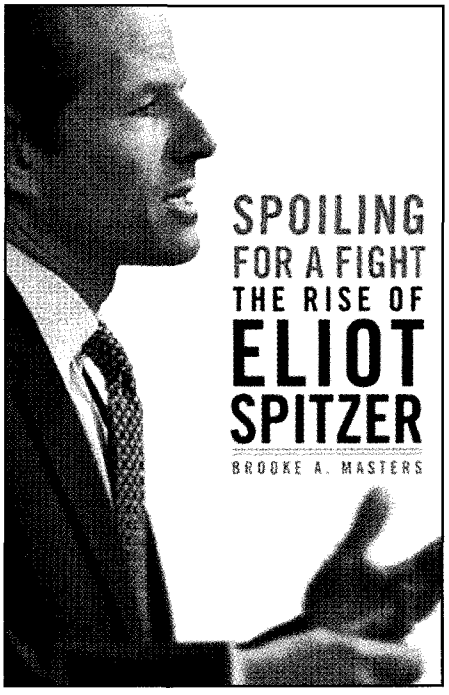
Eliot Spitzer pushes the limits of prosecutorial progressivism.

By Greg Sargent

George Orwell began his famous essay, "Reflections on Gandhi," by observing that "saints should always be judged guilty until they are proved innocent," and he went on to ask, "To what extent was Gandhi moved by vanity—by the consciousness of himself as a humble, naked old man, sitting on a praying mat and shaking empires by sheer spiritual power?" This opening shot by Orwell came to my mind while reading Brooke Masters's new biography of New York state attorney general Eliot Spitzer, *Spoiling for a Fight: The Rise of Eliot Spitzer*. Spitzer's dramatic and far-reaching crackdowns on Wall Street fraud have earned him international fame, a seemingly unobstructed path to the governor's mansion in this fall's election, and the adulation of Democrats at the national level who see in him a potential future savior. But, with apologies to Orwell, even saints deserve the presumption of innocence, and Spitzer, though no Gandhi, deserves the same.

When considering Spitzer, two lines of questioning present themselves. First, to what extent is he driven by vanity—by an awareness of his image as a square-jawed crusader playing for keeps on a giant stage, an Eliot Ness-like figure who avenges the small investor by fearlessly taking on Wall Street fat cats, who heretofore existed beyond reproach and retribution? Second, how far can this man go, and to what extent is he willing to compromise his core principles and values to get there?

Masters, a reporter for *The Washington Post*, provides a wealth of material to begin attempting an answer to both these questions. In a nutshell, she argues that Spitzer is pursuing traditional progressive ends with prosecutorial means, all the while carefully modeling his progressivism on historical figures (Republicans included) in a way that tidily insulates him from charges that he's an old-style anti-business Democrat. She was granted extraordinary access both to the man himself and to the inner workings of his sprawling operation, and this has enabled her to shed fresh light on his thinking and to contextualize him historically in a way that makes us see him anew.



Spoiling for a Fight: The Rise of Eliot Spitzer
By Brooke A. Masters
Times Books, $26.00

As Masters points out, Spitzer himself has written that the future of the Democratic Party depends on its ability "to promote government as a supporter of free markets, not simply a check on them," and to hew to "a vision consistent with trust-busting and other progressive market measures first enunciated early in the last century by Theodore Roosevelt." Which is exactly what Spitzer has done. In interviews with Masters, Spitzer seeks to cast himself not as coming from a populist tradition, but as operating within the tradition of Theodore Roosevelt and the Progressives—indeed, he keeps a framed photo of Roosevelt on the wall of his office. "I invoke him for the notion that capitalists understand when the market needs to be tamed," Spitzer explains. Like Roosevelt, Spitzer doesn't see himself as an antagonist of the free market, but rather as its defender against those who would game and corrupt the system. And he is quite explicit about the fact that he sees this not just as good policy, but good politics—particularly for Democrats, and for himself.

Though the position of New York attorney general has boasted energetic figures in the past—from Louis Lefkowitz to Robert Abrams—the job nonetheless has generally been a bureaucratic and legal backwater, hardly the kind which can bring national prominence, let alone international renown. And yet, upon winning election to the post in 1998 after dethroning the forgettable GOP incumbent Dennis Vacco, Spitzer transformed the position with amazing speed. How he did this—and how he engineered his rise—is a story that is told in this book with a great deal of dramatic detail. After a quick dip into his privileged past, upbringing, and early

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career—Horace Mann, Princeton, Harvard Law School, a stint in the Manhattan district attorney's office—we're taken through Spitzer's first failed attempt at winning the attorney general's seat in 1994, his successful bid four years later, and his initial efforts to expand the office into something commensurate with his ballooning ambition.

Two things are striking about this part of the tale: his constant efforts to resurrect old, quasi-abandoned statutes to pursue current ends, and the relentlessness with which Spitzer moved to expand the office in new ways that trampled on the bureaucratic turf of others. One story, oft-told elsewhere but well-related here, involves Spitzer's successful effort to crack down on financial fraud by dusting off the Martin Act—an old statute whose amendments give attorneys general civil investigative powers, such as the ability to issue subpoenas or question brokers and investment bankers. The book also takes us behind the scenes to witness the legal brinkmanship of Spitzer's highest-profile cases—his pursuit of Merrill Lynch; the targeting of Richard Grasso, the former chairman of the New York Stock Exchange with the gargantuan retirement package of $139.5 million; and his assault on Hank Greenberg, the venerable American International Group executive. Each episode provides an up-close view of Spitzer wrestling internally with the fact that his power and visibility are growing at a dizzying rate. The Spitzer presented here is someone who's constantly grappling with how far to go in applying his expanding clout without abusing it or damaging his carefully constructed crusading image.

At one moment we see Spitzer finally deciding against the prosecution of a very high-profile executive after "a couple of anguished jogs around the reservoir in Central Park." In another fascinating scene, Spitzer is preparing to give a speech to top research analysts, and he's privately resolved to give a very critical and aggressive address wholly out of sync with the gathering's celebratory tone. Just before the speech an aide approaches and suggests toning down the remarks, but Spitzer refuses. The result is a disaster, with Spitzer coming across as overbearing and drunk on his growing clout.

Indeed, Spitzer does display an ugly side—a relish of confrontation, a lust for the spotlight—as he gropes his way towards an understanding of the potential and limits of his growing power and visibility. Here and there, Spitzer and his cavalry of legal jousters come across as power-crazed bullies. In one instance, two Spitzer lawyers give an executive 24 hours to plead guilty, threatening if he doesn't to arrest him at home in front of his child and pregnant wife. In another, an exec is sent to jail despite his bond with his severely disabled daughter.

It is in Spitzer's overzealous prosecutorial streak that we can, with Masters's help, begin to locate an answer to our opening question: To what extent is Spitzer driven by vanity? The unmistakable conclusion, at least from Masters's telling, is that Spitzer has occasionally been carried away by an awareness of himself as a crusader who can strike fear into a whole industry with the simple wave of a subpoena. This invites comparisons, Masters says, with Rudy Giuliani, the former U.S. attorney and New York mayor whose prosecutorial streak led him to bully all manner of weak constituencies in his quest to clean up Gotham. But the comparison is only partly valid. The hectoring tendency in both men is rooted in fundamentally different impulses. And it's this difference, I think, which ultimately explains Eliot Spitzer.

Giuliani's overzealousness is driven primarily by a lower-middle-class white resentment that was widespread in the New York City of the '60s and '70s, when rising crime and the city's dire fiscal situation turned it into a racial tinderbox. His prosecutorial streak is an avenging one rooted not in ideology but in (not entirely unjustified) hatred of urban disorder. Spitzer's zealousness, on the other hand, is far more ideological. It's driven by a genuine progressive concern—a desire not for order and safety, but for fairness. Though Spitzer strains to avoid being labeled "populist," all of his crackdowns—whether on people committing financial fraud, unfair labor practices or environmental violations—are animated by a traditionally liberal impulse to level the playing field for small investors, workers, and those subject to excessive environmental depredation, among others. Indeed, it isn't too much of a stretch to say that Spitzer has, whether by accident or by design, crafted a unique politics all his own: prosecutorial progressivism.

In sum, if Spitzer does overreach, if he is occasionally carried away by his own white-knight image, he's still a man who's at bottom fundamentally fair-minded and genuinely committed to effective public service. In some of the best parts of the book, Masters lets Spitzer defend himself against the charges of overzealousness so often directed his way. His overriding defense is to suggest that one should be impatient when governmental institutions fail; one should push and strain and trample on others if it's necessary to get those institutions working again; one shouldn't be overly respectful of bureaucratic turf boundaries if they're standing in the way of getting things done.

Spitzer's energetic impatience with the status quo has succeeded brilliantly for him in political terms, which is why he has an overwhelming lead in every poll to be the next governor of New York, a traditional jumping-off point for higher office, including bids for the presidency. But should Spitzer become governor, and should he bring to that position the same impulse towards reform, he'll face a whole new set of challenges. He'll be doing battle not with a financial elite, but with a political elite—much of which is in Spitzer's party—which has been dominant for decades. Becoming governor will require a whole new set of compromises, many of them with people who should be targets of his presumed efforts at reform once in office.

Indeed, if and when Spitzer becomes governor, we'll discover what his reformist zeal is really made of—and how far it will take him. By demonstrating both Spitzer's ability and the astonishing success of his political formula, Masters's exhaustive study shows that it would be unwise to place limits on our estimation of this unique public figure's ambitions—or his ability to realize them.

Greg Sargent is founder of the political blog The Horse's Mouth and a contributing editor at *New York* magazine.

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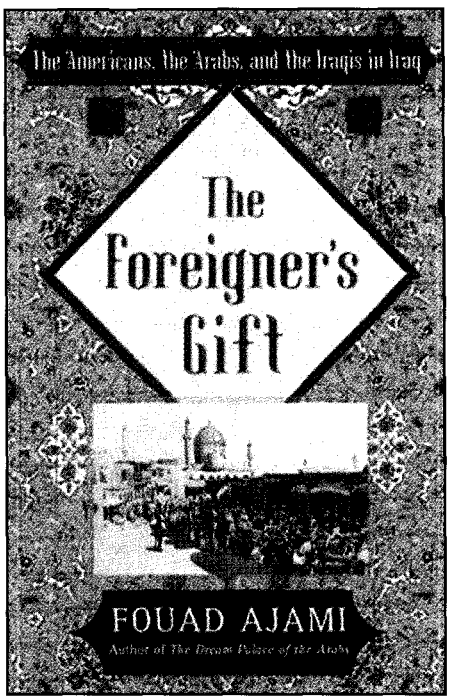
The Gift That Keeps on Spinning

Fouad Ajami predicted that American troops would be welcomed as liberators. You would never guess from his new book.

By Christian Caryl

The promise and the predicament of Fouad Ajami's new book are neatly encapsulated in one of its opening scenes. It is the summer of 2005, and a friend of the author's, a minister in the transition government of Iraq, has invited Ajami along with him to an audience with the most influential man in the country: Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani. Most Americans couldn't pick Sistani out of a police line-up, much less describe his role. And yet, as Ajami rightly argues, it is Sistani—more than any terrorist, military commander, or elected politician in the country—who has used his power to decide the fate of Iraq at several critical junctures over the past three years.

Sistani is a jurist, an authority on Islamic law who runs the prestigious seminary in the holy city of Najaf. In his role as a *marja al-taqlid*, a "source of emulation," he is a living exemplar of the spiritual values that almost every Iraqi Shiite holds dear. That means that he commands the passionate loyalty of the majority of Iraq's population (most of whom, of course, are Shiites). And yet he has never sought out the media or courted the crowd. As Ajami writes, "I was not prepared for the simplicity of Sistani's house; it was a few steps removed from the shops, in the middle of an ordinary alleyway." Inside, the furniture seems to consist primarily of floor cushions; there is no air conditioning, quite a significant omission in those parts. Finally the Grand Ayatollah makes his appearance, strikingly affable in contrast to the severe public countenance that stares out of posters around the country. But he gets straight to the point with his visitors: "The country was in the throes of a decisive fight over a new constitution," writes Ajami, "and Sistani's message to the man of the government was unambiguous. 'I want you to do everything you can to bring our Sunni Arab brothers into the fold.'" Sistani then presses for a change in the election laws to ensure that the Sunnis are given a greater share of power. "'You are the elected government; the people voted for you; they went to the polls under mortar rounds.'"



The Foreigner's Gift
By Fouad Ajami
Free Press, $26.00

It's a remarkable encounter, and Ajami's account of it shows him at his best—the American public intellectual uniquely equipped, by background and learning, to explain the intricacies of Arab politics to American readers. The offspring of a prominent Lebanese Shiite family, Ajami is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the editorial board of *Foreign Affairs*, and the Johns Hopkins School for Advanced International Studies. He is also well-entrenched in the mainstream media, as a commentator for *U.S. News & World Report* and CBS, and as a frequent contributor to the op-ed pages. As for this book, *The Foreigner's Gift* is his account of six trips he has taken to Iraq since the beginning of the occupation. Ajami's aim here is to limn the ambiguities and contradictions of "American Iraq," that extraordinary experiment in "liberal imperialism" in the Middle East that began in the spring of 2003. It should be said that he often delivers. He has an enviable gift for charting those invisible lines of clan, tribe, and faction that structure the Arabic-speaking world. His chapter on the feuds and alliances among the great Shiite families of Iraq should be required reading for all American soldiers and policy-makers.

And yet, rather more importantly, this book reveals itself to be a remarkable study in schizophrenia, one that mingles blindness and acuity, clarity and obfuscation in almost equal measure. Ajami has the capacity to tell us some very important truths about Iraq because he is so intimately familiar with many of the political and cultural currents that lie beneath the country's bloody turmoil. But he also happens to be deeply and personally implicated in the policies he's describing—though you could easily

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read this entire book without ever figuring it out.

Just take that Iraqi government minister, the friend who brings Ajami along on the visit to Sistani. His name is Ahmad Chalabi. Yes, exactly, that Ahmad Chalabi. His is a persistent presence in this book, and at one point rather far into the narrative Ajami presents us with a long and eloquent defense of the man who made a name for himself as the Pentagon's favorite Iraqi. That Ajami feels such sympathy with the head of the Iraqi National Congress (INC) should not come entirely as a surprise. Chalabi, like Ajami, is the scion of Shia notables in his homeland who ended up making it big in America.

Still, if there's one thing that the story of the Iraq war should have made manifest by now, it's that Ahmad Chalabi is a deeply problematic figure on multiple levels—to the extent that it's a bit hard to know where to begin. When I was reporting from Iraq in 2003, the only name I heard locals use for Chalabi was "Ahmad the Thief." It was a nickname motivated by the speed with which his INC cronies moved to take over choice real estate and business concessions as soon as they were installed in Baghdad with the help of the American invaders. Various polls have determined that Chalabi has some of the lowest popularity ratings of any politician in Iraq, and he was not reelected to parliament in last year's elections.

Ajami doesn't seem to be aware of any of this, though. To him, Chalabi is merely tragically misunderstood, a noble patriot dropped by the Americans like a hot potato in the summer of 2004 when they realized that he wouldn't do their bidding.

Chalabi's enemies in the U.S. government have accused him of spying for the Iranians; to Ajami this is mere carping. "These charges were odd: Iran was next door, and a factor in the political life of Iraq," he writes. He's similarly dismissive of the scandal involving Chalabi's monumental bank failure in Jordan in the 1980s. (Chalabi was forced to quit the country and was tried in absentia for fraud and embezzlement.) Ajami insists that it was all just a Sunni plot, staged by Jordan's Hashemite rulers at a time when they were especially cozy with Saddam. (Never mind that the scandal turned up hundreds of millions of dollars in unsecured loans, and encompassed banks in Lebanon and Switzerland as well as Jordan—all convincingly documented in a piece by my *Newsweek* colleagues in May 2003.) And Ajami almost completely dismisses the most damning charges against Chalabi: that he and his INC colleagues purveyed faulty and fabricated stories of Saddam's WMD program to reporters, U.S. intelligence agencies, and decision-makers in the White House.

Of course, addressing these issues in a more critical spirit would expose Ajami himself, for he, too, played an important role in making the case for the war. It was Ajami's authority that Dick Cheney chose to cite in a speech in August 2002: "As for the reaction of the Arab 'street,' the Middle East expert Professor Fouad Ajami predicts that after liberation, the streets in Basra and Baghdad are 'sure to erupt in joy in the same way the throngs in Kabul greeted the Americans.'" A few months later, in the January 2003 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, Ajami laid out an eloquent case for coercive democratization in the Middle East. "Above and beyond toppling the regime of Saddam Hussein and dismantling its deadly weapons," he wrote, "the driving motivation of a new American endeavor in Iraq and in neighboring Arab lands should be modernizing the Arab world."

Most of what I read in this book suggests that Ajami still believes that that is a worthy cause, and that the bloody grind of the Iraqi insurgency is still far from consigning that dream to the grave. But that's just my guess. Nowhere in this book do we learn whether Ajami's earlier hopes have been changed, defeated, or strengthened by what he has found on the ground in Iraq; he is happy to focus his discerning gaze on the odd bystander, but he never deigns to turn it on himself. His guise throughout the book is that of the sharp-eyed observer—remote, patrician, often tangibly saddened, at times a bit bemused. You'd never guess that he's actually a player as well.

And that has all-too-obvious implications for the project at hand. When the talk turns to that faulty intelligence on weapons of mass destruction, for example, Ajami's analytical rigor yields to a sort of shoulder-shrugging diffidence. "The Iraq campaign had entered a difficult stretch; the hunt for weapons of mass destruction had proved futile." As someone who argued the case for removing Saddam's tyranny even before it became clear that the weapons didn't exist, Ajami might argue that the allegations of a Bush administration bait-and-switch regarding the motivation for war don't really apply to him. But, again, we can only assume that this is the case. When Ajami touches upon the issue, his normally vigorous prose style suddenly dissolves into vagueness: "There is no marker, no exact turning point, that can with hindsight tell us when the war in Iraq turned into a campaign for the wider reform of the Arab world....In one plausible line of reasoning, the Wilsonianism had come to the fore when the hunt for weapons of mass destruction had run aground. The war, and its sacrifices, had to be justified...." Whew. That cynical turn to Wilsonianism—thank goodness Ajami didn't have anything to do with it. The inability to attribute precise agency here is all the more striking in an author who is constantly excoriating the Arabs for their failure to accept responsibility for their actions.

About those Arabs, by the way. Ajami has always been a harsh vivisectionist of Arab pathologies, and especially when the Arabs in question are Sunni. Not that there's anything wrong with that; the dysfunctional Arab establishment is largely a Sunni one, after all. (I particularly enjoyed his portrait of Sunni religious scholar Yusuf al-Qaradawi, who inveighs against the infidels even though his children have all studied at British and American universities. "Qaradawi partook of the modern world but agitated against it," as Ajami notes with characteristic acerbity.) But there are moments in this book when his fatalism about "Araby" (as he likes to call it) becomes rather disconcerting—which is saying a lot. "There was little that a foreign power could do to reach that impenetrable core of beliefs; there were no hearts and minds in Araby to be won for this American campaign and no way

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of convincing an appreciable body of opinion in the Arab world of the justness of this campaign." The Americans, for their part, can do virtually no wrong. Even the most egregious failings—such as the criminal nonchalance with which the Bush administration prepared for the occupation—earn but a few throw-away lines, usually related second-hand. Perhaps Ajami has been reading too much Henry James. There is much melancholy talk of American innocence in the face of Arab moral depravity and Machiavellian maneuvering. The Americans, as Ajami puts it, are the latest in a series of would-be imperial conquerors to capture the commanding heights of an Arab territory, only to be defeated by the locals' capacity for intrigue. "For centuries, its [the Arab world's] ramparts may have been woefully inadequate and its people unable to ward off foreign armies, but its alleyways have always been bewildering to strangers from afar."

In this telling, if the experiment of American Iraq ends in failure, it won't be because it was wrongheaded and doomed from the start, or because the Bush administration shoved aside the vast State Department prewar plans and stocked the occupation authority with hapless greenhorns from the Texas Republican party. It will be because of Arab intransigence, and the inability of the (Sunni) Arab establishment to understand that an American military presence smack-dab in the center of the Middle East is the best thing that could have happened to it. And it certainly won't be because experts like Ajami predicted that the locals would welcome the invaders as liberators and friends (conveniently allowing policy-makers to assume that the occupation would be short and bloodless even while relying on a minimum of troops). In that sense, perhaps, it is not only the American generals and proconsuls who are trapped in the alleyways of Mesopotamia. Perhaps I am being overly cynical, but I was left with the feeling that Ajami is already working on an exit strategy of his own.

Christian Caryl is the Tokyo bureau chief of *Newsweek*. He has reported from 35 countries, including Afghanistan, Iraq, Russia, and North Korea.

An historian's tale

Richard Hofstadter and the rise and fall of American liberalism.

By Jacob Heilbrunn

Richard Hofstadter: An Intellectual Biography
By David S. Brown
University of Chicago, $27.50

A biography of a historian seems fated, more often than not, to be a rather boring affair. Unless the historian has played a leading role in great events, it's hard to imagine what even the most diligent biographer can uncover. That his subject read a lot of books, took copious notes, visited libraries and archives, and sat behind a desk, or, these days, computer screen, for a good part of the day?

Somehow David S. Brown has surmounted these obstacles to produce a biography of Richard Hofstadter, the historian and author (*The Paranoid Style in American Politics*, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*), that is not only a revelation, but also a fascinating read. Brown, an associate professor of history at Elizabethtown College, has written an account worthy of Hofstadter himself: wry, humane, and illuminating. In *Richard Hofstadter: An Intellectual Biography*, Brown perceptively uses Hofstadter's life as a lens through which to view the rise and fall of liberalism. It becomes clear from this book that Hofstadter, was the first great historian of American conservatism, understanding like few on the left, the grievances that have always animated America's right wing. Indeed, his writings eerily presaged the ascendance of the far right in America well before George W. Bush came to power.

One of the most renowned historians of the past century, Hofstadter taught for much of his life at Columbia University where he twice won the Pulitzer Prize for his writings on American history and politics. Hofstadter was born in Buffalo, N.Y., in 1916, to a Polish-Jewish father and his German-Lutheran wife. His mother died when he was a little boy, a trauma that left a permanent mark on him; Hofstadter's son, Dan, later described him as a "cheerful melancholic." Hofstadter, as he would do later on when his first wife died, plunged into his

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work, becoming class president and valedictorian in high school. During his years at the University of Buffalo, Hofstadter dabbled in radical politics. His energetic and charismatic girlfriend and future wife, Felice Swados, was a staunch leftist. As a graduate student at Columbia during the Great Depression, he attended meetings of the Young Communist League with her: "While Felice's commitment to party discipline led her to the edge of intellectual surrender," writes Brown, "Hofstadter's radicalism was of a more cerebral, critical, and pessimistic kind." Still, Hofstadter joined the Columbia graduate unit of the CP for a few months, abandoning it in February 1939 out of repugnance for the Moscow show trials. Hofstadter's first tussles against anti-intellectualism, Brown observes, were against the left. Indeed, Hofstadter was anything but a fan of the New Deal, which he, like many on the left, viewed as a poor substitute for sweeping reforms that would directly attack powerful industrialists. According to Brown, Hofstadter's "most visceral memories were of the weaknesses and inconsistencies of the old liberalism; its failure to end the Depression, contain fascism, condemn racism, or develop a productive intellectual system to counter native veneration for the yeoman and frontier."

Hofstadter, who landed a job at the University of Maryland during World War II, was determined to write his way into the big time. And he did. The books and essays poured forth from his typewriter. Like many successful academics, Hofstadter knew that it took a ritualized schedule that was never deviated from to crank out the necessary words. All his life, Hofstadter followed it. He published a critique of Social Darwinism at age 28 that was well-received; but it was his first whack at the struts of the Progressive school, in his wildly popular *The American Political Tradition*, that made his name. Pungent, whimsical, and searching, it consisted of a collection of 10 biographical sketches of notable Americans from Jefferson to FDR, along with group portraits of the Founding Fathers and the robber-barons of the 1920's. Hofstadter dispensed with the pieties of earlier generations and depicted flesh-and-blood human beings whose motives were sometimes less than lofty. Never much interested in archival research, Hofstadter offered something else—lively prose, irreverent asides, and sweeping judgments. He had a special flair for bringing characters to life, portraying Theodore Roosevelt as a kind of closet fascist who wanted "stern dedication to nationalism, martial values, and a common spirit of racial identity and destiny," writes Brown. Lincoln was as much opportunist as great emancipator. Jefferson an egalitarian? In truth, he was an aristocrat. Or was he? Where Hofstadter was concerned, reputations existed to be overturned, but it was a necessary corrective to decades of pious historical interpretations. Besides, as he himself said, he was an admirer of H.L. Mencken and wanted to infuse his writing with more than a pinch of wit and buffoonery. He did. Fifty years after its publication, *The American Political Tradition* still sells thousands of copies a year.

For all his playfulness, however, Hofstadter represented something of a serious change in the way America understood itself—he was the avatar of a new, and largely Jewish, immigrant generation that viewed populism as almost tantamount to nativism. He was, moreover, part of a new generation of historians that wasn't breaking with shibboleths of an older one—it was demolishing them. In essence, the old progressive historians like Charles Beard and Vernon Parrington had romanticized the Populists as noble agricultural workers standing up to industry. Beard, in a kind of watered-down Marxism, was obsessed with economic forces as the motor of history. He portrayed the Founding Fathers, for example, as drafting the Constitution almost solely to protect their own financial interests. The notion that they could have been animated by more noble aspirations was foreign to him. The Populists, for Beard and Parrington, by contrast, were unblemished heroes because they were farmers who were standing up against the avaricious plutocrats of Wall Street. Beard also opposed America's participation in World War II, accusing Franklin D. Roosevelt of tricking the United States into an unnecessary conflict. Hofstadter would have none of this. He viewed this as a hopelessly romantic and sentimental view of America's past. He saw, by contrast, that racism, anti-Semitism, and right-wing sentiments were an ineradicable part of populism. As tempting as it might be to revere the yeoman farmer, it was delusional.

Hofstadter knew of whence he spoke: The University of California history department contemplated offering Hofstadter a job, but one member wrote, "I am not yet quite sure that he is the man we want. His point of view strikes me as rather typical of the New York Jewish intelligentsia, although I do not even know that he is a Jew." Some of these older, nationalistic historians believed that Jews lacked the innate ability to comprehend Anglo-American history, just as English departments refused to accept Jewish professors because it was believed by some that they would never be able to understand the great works written by George Eliot or William Shakespeare. Mercifully, change was inevitable. Lionel Trilling had been the first Jew to win tenure in the English department at Columbia. Daniel Bell, Jacques Barzun, and Seymour Martin Lipset taught there as well. They jokingly called it "the Upper West Side Kibbutz." There never has been such a concentration of intellect at an American university and might never be again.

Hofstadter's efforts to combat obscurantism reached their high-water mark in his book *Anti-*

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Intellectualism in American Life. Hofstadter railed against radical political activism, arguing that the evangelical movement was the crucible in which the anti-intellectual impulse was formed. He could barely conceal his contempt for the evangelical Protestant belief in unmediated access to God and the notion that the Bible was the real source of religious authority. He even went back to Cromwell and the English Civil War to argue that the fact that "successive waves of Millennarians, Anabaptists, Seekers, Ranters, and Quakers [who] assailed the established order and its clergy, preached a religion of the poor, argued for intuition and inspiration as against learning and doctrine" left a deep mark on the fledgling American nation. How far was it from such riff-raff to Sen. Joseph McCarthy?

Hofstadter was too subtle a historian to draw such a link explicitly, but he did, as his biographer notes, have a penchant for the sweeping assertion over the qualified statement. But that's partly why his work has lasted. Hofstadter searched for big explanations for even bigger events.

Perhaps his most controversial stance was to propound what has come to be known as the consensus school of history. As the consensus school saw it, the era of conflict in the United States was over in the 1950s. It was, as Daniel Bell put it, the end of ideology. The New Deal had cemented its gains. The only opponents to continuing the New Deal were the nutcases on the right, who were diagnosed, by Hofstadter and others, as suffering from a kind of psychological illness. In the collection of essays, *The Radical Right*, Hofstadter, Seymour Martin Lipset, and others argued that the right suffered from status anxiety and paranoia. In a 1962 lecture at the University of Southern California, Hofstadter joked that conservatives had "lost touch with reality....We certainly cannot commit them all to mental hospitals, but we can recognize their agitation as a kind of vocational therapy, without which they might have to be committed." By loftily dismissing any conservative concerns as irritable gestures, as Lionel Trilling suggested, the Left helped sow the seeds for the conservative backlash. Conservatives, who have perfected their own form of victimization politics, relish citing such snobbish statements in order to condemn liberals as incorrigible elitists. Still, at a moment when right-wing evangelicals exercise a stranglehold over the GOP and the Bush administration deflects, or tries to deflect, concerns about economic problems by turning to the standbys of flag-burning, gay marriage, intelligent design, and abortion, Hofstadter, it must be said, was on to something when he decried the "paranoid style."

To his credit, Brown makes numerous telling criticisms of Hofstadter. Was there a touch of hauteur in Hofstadter's approach? Indeed, there was. As Brown emphasizes, Hofstadter was afraid of the unwashed masses, viewing them as unpredictable, capricious, and easily manipulated. At times, it seems that Hofstadter confused his own personal anxieties with America's.

The irony, however, was that in his own lifetime Hofstadter, who always fretted about the durability of liberalism, would be vilified, not by the right, but by the student left as "square." The sorry story of the rise of the radical left at Columbia and elsewhere is ably recounted by Brown. It's a reminder that the far left did almost as much to cripple liberalism as the right. One anecdote suffices to convey the sheer zaniness of the late 1960s: After referring to the Nazi-Soviet pact at San Francisco State University, Brown writes, Hofstadter was shouted off the stage. Yet Hofstadter was an opponent of the Vietnam War, who marched at Montgomery in 1965, and who, in a brilliant article for *The New York Times Magazine*, showed that America the omnipotent was a fanciful myth; in fact, America had lost wars in its history, Hofstadter noted, and, for that matter, World War I was won on the cheap by entering at the last moment. In any case, Hofstadter never was viewed as a full-fledged enemy by the Columbia student left; he returned to his office one day in April 1968 to find a note stating "The Forces of Liberation have, at great length, decided to spare your office (because you are not one of them)."

Such small kindnesses did not spare Hofstadter the fate of being attacked at great length by a new generation of historians who sought to revise the revisionist. The young radical had become an old fogey, at least in the eyes of his successors. The social critic and historian Christopher Lasch complained in 1965 that the postwar generation of immigrant scholars had itself become compromised in its quest for status and power—as though Lasch and others were somehow free of ambition. Hofstadter himself, though he regretted the social and political upheaval, recognized that conflict had again moved to the center of American politics in the late '60s.

Was Hofstadter's generation of liberals too weak to fight the radicals on the right and left? Was there something inherently flawed in liberalism that made it easy prey? Brown never really contemplates those uncomfortable questions, which have acquired a new importance as liberals engage in a fresh round of self-mortification to divine how they might challenge the right's political dominance. What role Hofstadter might have played is impossible to know. He did not live to see the resurgence of the right. He died of leukemia in October 1970 at age 54. He would surely be dismayed by the unexpected turn American politics has taken, but more than pleased by his fine biography.

Jacob Heilbrunn is a writer in Washington D.C.

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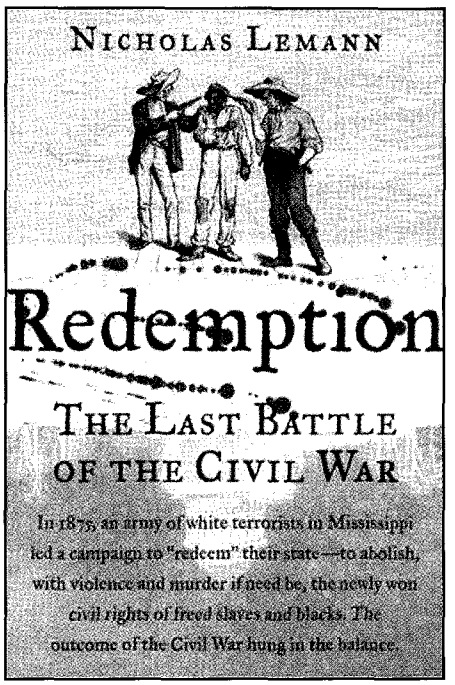
The Savage South

Lessons of an American insurgency.

By Jon Meacham

Albert T. Morgan was desperate and on the run. A Radical Republican in Reconstruction-era Yazoo City, Miss., he had managed to get elected sheriff in 1873—briefly, and only after great trouble from local whites who for a time refused to vacate the courthouse. Now, on Sept. 1, 1875, Morgan, who was white himself, was under assault from the White Leagues, armed groups dedicated to overturning the Southern military defeat in the Civil War by campaigns of violence and intimidation. At a public meeting in Yazoo, a town at the edge of the Mississippi Delta, a defiant white opened fire on Morgan, a veteran of the Union army, as he was making a campaign speech. To strike Morgan was to strike a blow against black voting and civil rights. As a bloody melee unfolded, Morgan slipped through a window and, from hiding, wrote the Reconstruction governor of the state, Adelbert Ames. "We must have U.S. troops," Morgan wrote. "Can't we get help from somewhere?" A follow-up letter was even more urgent: "Can nothing be done? I am in great danger of losing my life.... My friend, I fought four years; was wounded several times; suffered in hospitals, and as a prisoner; was in twenty-seven different engagements to free the slave and save our glorious Union—to save such a country as this!"

The ultimate answer from President Grant's Washington about whether federal troops could establish order and enforce the laws—laws that would have allowed blacks to vote—was depressing and epochal: No. As usual, politics was paramount: Grant later recalled that Ohio Republicans prevailed on him to hold off from intervening in state affairs to placate national Republican sentiment for a limited national government. And so the terrorists—the word is chosen with care—won.



Redemption: The Last Battle of the Civil War
By Nicholas Lemann
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, $24.00

Tragically, of course, Morgan's plea for help from the federal government to right racial wrongs in the South was one that would be repeated for nearly a century. The cry from the darkness of Yazoo would be most fully answered, I suppose, 90 years later, when, in the aftermath of Bloody Sunday, President Lyndon B. Johnson told Congress that God would favor the undertaking he proposed: a federal Voting Rights Act. While the story of Selma is well known—and 1965 is rightly celebrated as a high-water mark of American liberty—1875 never makes the roll call of crucial years in the American story. (It is, to say the least, no 1776 or 1865.)

With the arrival of Nicholas Lemann's brilliant new book, *Redemption: The Last Battle of the Civil War*, however, both the year and its larger meaning stand a fine chance of receiving the notice and study they deserve. Lemann tells the riveting and largely unknown story of how the white South mounted a successful insurgency in the wake of Lee's surrender, winning by terror and murder in the shadows what could not be won on the field. (The account of Morgan's horrific experience in Yazoo is drawn from Lemann's telling.) At a brisk 212 pages, *Redemption* is accessible and important, and we cannot really understand race or political power in modern America without understanding what happened in the South a decade after Appomattox. "Once the federal government had made it clear, most dramatically in Mississippi in 1875, that it would not enforce black people's constitutional right to vote," writes Lemann, who is now the dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University, "it left the way clear for the Southern states, after a time, to take that right away explicitly." In this light, it is clear that the dark spirit of the South did not die in April 1865—and one large lesson of Lemann's book, a lesson with deep resonance today, is that wars can be won or lost in the aftermath almost as completely as they can be in the pitch of organized battle.

A significant disclosure to the reader: I am not an objective reviewer of this book. A contributing editor of this magazine, Lemann was a generous counselor to me when I was an editor of *The Washington*

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Monthly in the early 1990s, and I consider him a friend. I am also an unabashed admirer of his earlier work; I believe that his 1991 account of the black migration to the North, *The Promised Land*, is one of the finest books of the second half of the 20th century, and, like so many others, I have learned much from his *New Yorker* pieces on the people and culture of Washington. My opinion of *Redemption*, while not objective, is genuine.

At the heart of Lemann's new book stands Adelbert Ames, an engaging character whose ambition, good intentions, and ultimate failure seem to mirror that of many whites of the time, North and South. Born in 1835 in Rockland, Maine, Ames graduated from West Point in 1861, was wounded at Bull Run and went on to fight at Chancellorsville, Fredericksburg, Petersburg, Gettysburg, and Antietam. He led the capture of Fort Fisher, won the Medal of Honor, and was posted to South Carolina after the war to help restore order and enforce the peace.

On the simplest human level, Ames was horrified by what he found in the defeated South. His time was spent, he wrote his parents, "in trying white men for killing negroes, of which work we have more than we can well do." White Southerners, he said, "think about as much of taking the life of a Freedman as I would that of a dog." In March 1869, under Grant, Ames became the provisional governor of Mississippi. The work at hand was enormous, but it was the work for which the Civil War had been fought. In Lemann's words, Ames's "main assignment was to supervise—with the backing of a new president who seemed prepared to be much tougher on the former Confederates than his predecessor, Andrew Johnson, had been—a fall election in which Mississippi would approve the new state constitution, accept the new federal Fourteenth and Fifteenth constitutional amendments, which guaranteed Negroes civil and voting rights, and elect state officials, after which it would, at last, be readmitted to the United States."

The world Ames was entering was one of black hopes and virulent white resentment—a virulence that, in the early 1870s, turned repulsively violent. Lemann opens the book with a detailed account of a massacre at Colfax, La., in 1873. It was Easter morning, and local whites rebelled against the workings of an actual democracy in which blacks could vote, hold office, and—worst of all from the white point of view—wield authority over their former masters. After a standoff, blacks holed up in the courthouse offered their surrender to an armed force of Confederate veterans. Whites claimed the blacks fired upon them as they made their way to accept the surrender; blacks denied it, but, as Lemann notes, there is no dispute about what happened next. "The whites slaughtered them," Lemann writes. "Burning Negroes jumped from the second-story window or ran out the front door 'only to meet a savage and hellish butchery'" as T. Chester Morris, the noted black Civil War correspondent, reported. Lemann picks up the story: "Inside the building they pried up floorboards and tried, unsuccessfully, to hide beneath them. They were all killed, unarmed, at close range, while begging for mercy....What was happening now was not a hard military fight but a killing frenzy after the battle was over, after the outcome had been clearly settled, and with [the whites'] opponents unarmed."

Such was the Southern way of death on the holiest day of the Christian year. As Morris put it in New Orleans after Colfax: "On Easter Sunday, when the Christian world was chanting anthems in commemoration of the resurrection of the world's Redeemer, when from every sanctuary the gospel of love and peace was proclaimed, it was then that angels veiled their faces, and devils howled at the bloody and revolting scenes that were enacted on the banks of the Red River."

There were many Colfaxes throughout the Reconstruction South, particularly in Ames's Mississippi. A rising man—he married the beautiful daughter of Congressman Benjamin Butler, the ferocious Union man who actually waved the bloody shirt of a murdered federal official on the floor of the House to underscore the depth of Southern depravity—Ames was nevertheless defeated by the relentlessness of white resistance to conform to the law of the land. Often rebuffed by the federal government, surrounded by whites who either actively or implicitly supported violent defiance, Ames gloomily retired to the governor's mansion in Jackson in the mid-1870s, reading Trollope's *The Way We Live Now* and mulling whether he could invent a new kind of ladder.

Meanwhile, outside the mansion, the state was descending into tyranny. Gen. Philip Sheridan thought that much of the region was in the grip of "terrorism," and Ames's father, reading accounts of the white violence against blacks and those who defended their rights, wrote his son to tell him things one suspects Ames already knew well: "I fear that Congress will not give the President power to put down the White Leaguers of the South. If not, there can be nothing but a reign of terror in the South until the nation is involved in a Civil War from one end of the land to the other of which the last war is a mere trifle compared to it."

Ames's father was correct in the broadest sense: The war over civil and voting rights would last another hundred years or so, and the rise of Jim Crow in the years after the battles of the 1870s was itself a reign of terror. The "Redemption" of Lemann's title is the Southern version of postwar history—the old Confederacy was "redeemed" from the Civil War by standing up for itself in the years afterward. Lemann brilliantly describes how the traditional story of Reconstruction—that the South was treated brutally by politically corrupt carpetbaggers who forced the enfranchisement of supposedly inferior blacks—took shape in the racist ethos of the late nineteenth century. This skewed version of history endured, however, and, excepting the more overt racism, even now remains prevalent in the popular imagination. Lemann has corrected the record, and we owe him a great debt.

On that long-ago night in Yazoo City, Albert Morgan, the sheriff who was driven into hiding by angry whites, struck an important note in one of his anxious letters to Ames. "I have some love left for my country, but what is [a] country" that fails to "protect...its defenders?" It is a question that echoes down the decades, and should remind all of us who love our country that the defense and projection of her true values require much—on the field of battle, and far beyond.

Jon Meacham, the managing editor of *Newsweek*, is the author of *American Gospel: God, the Founding Fathers, and the Making of America*.

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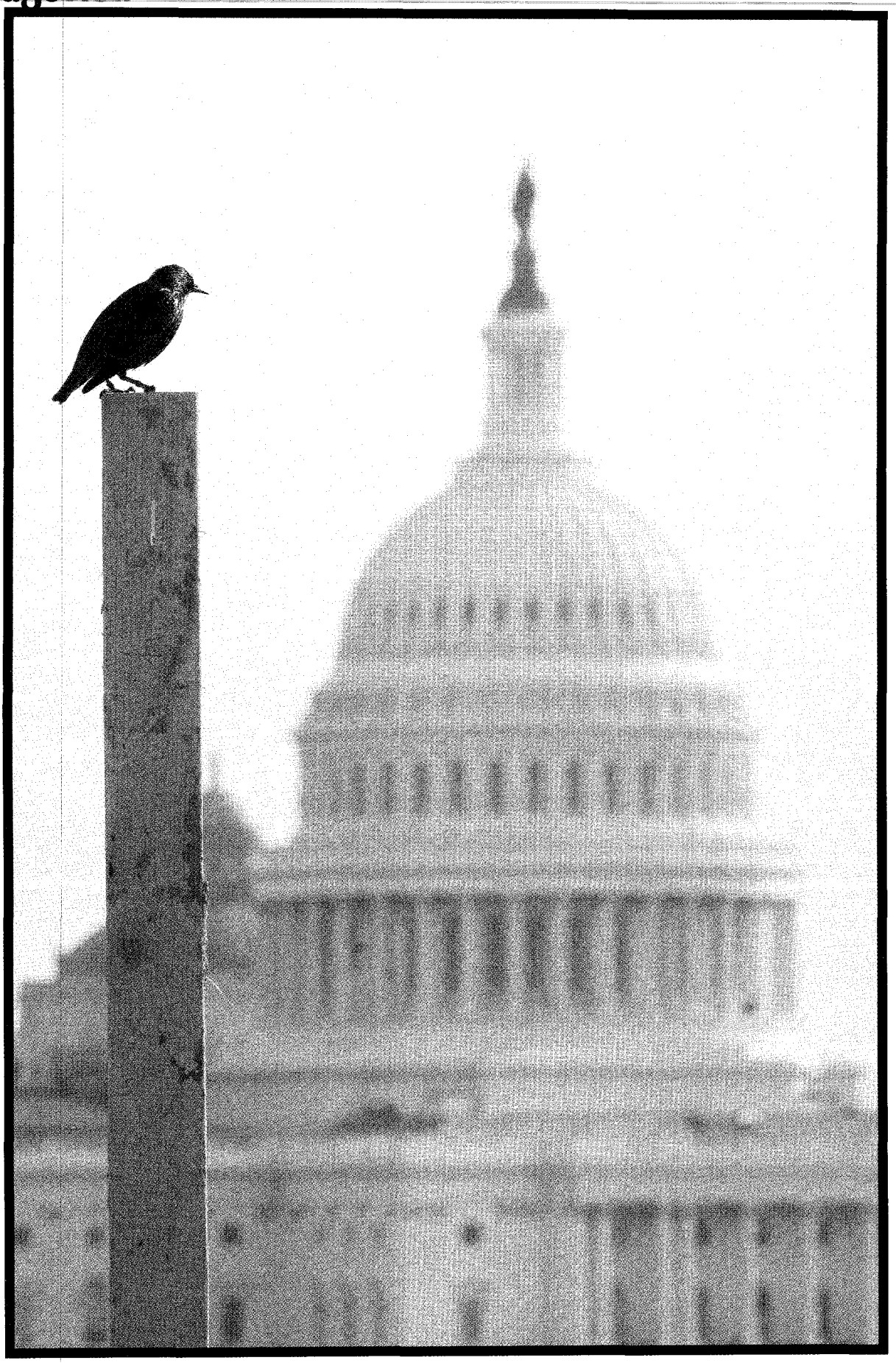

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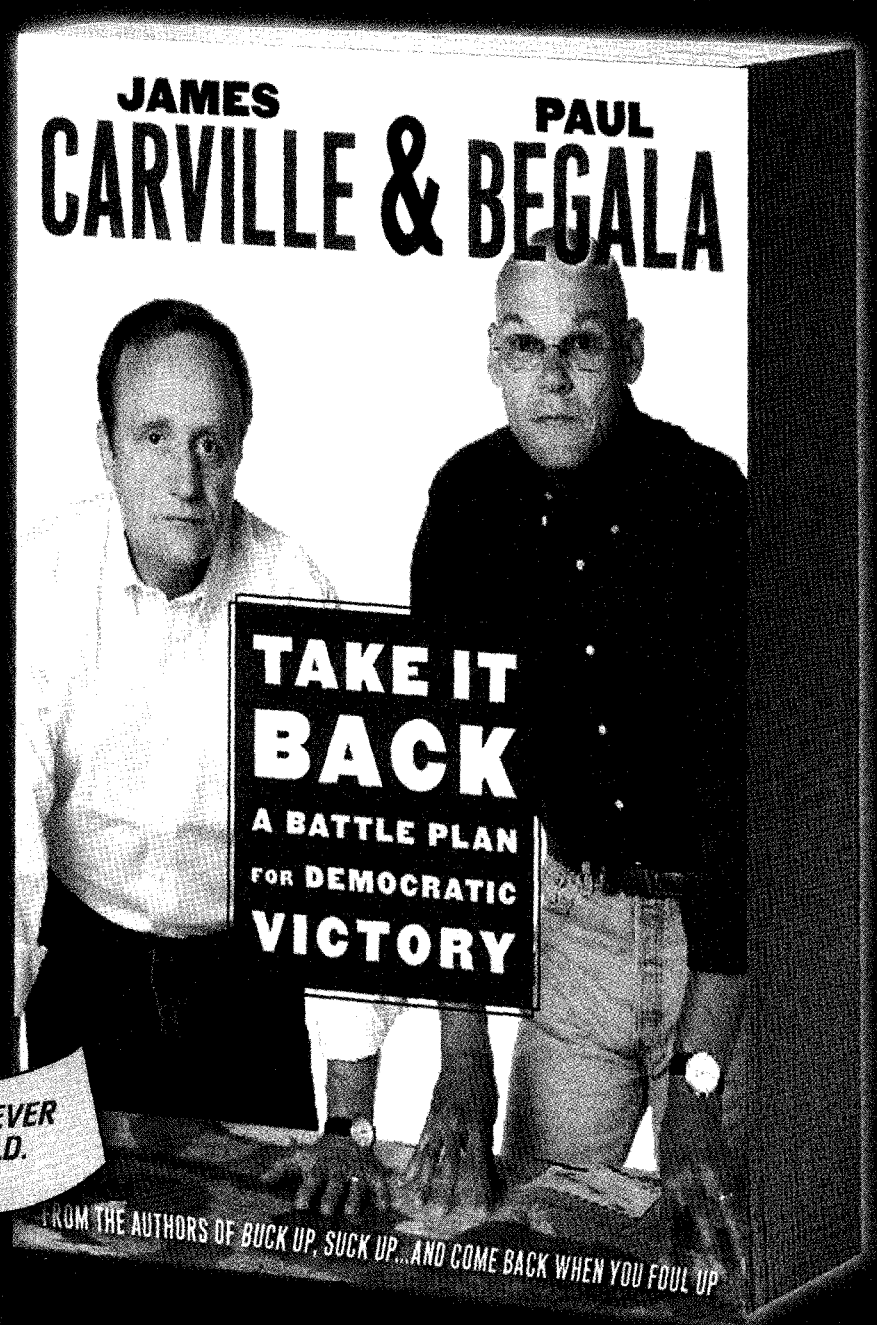

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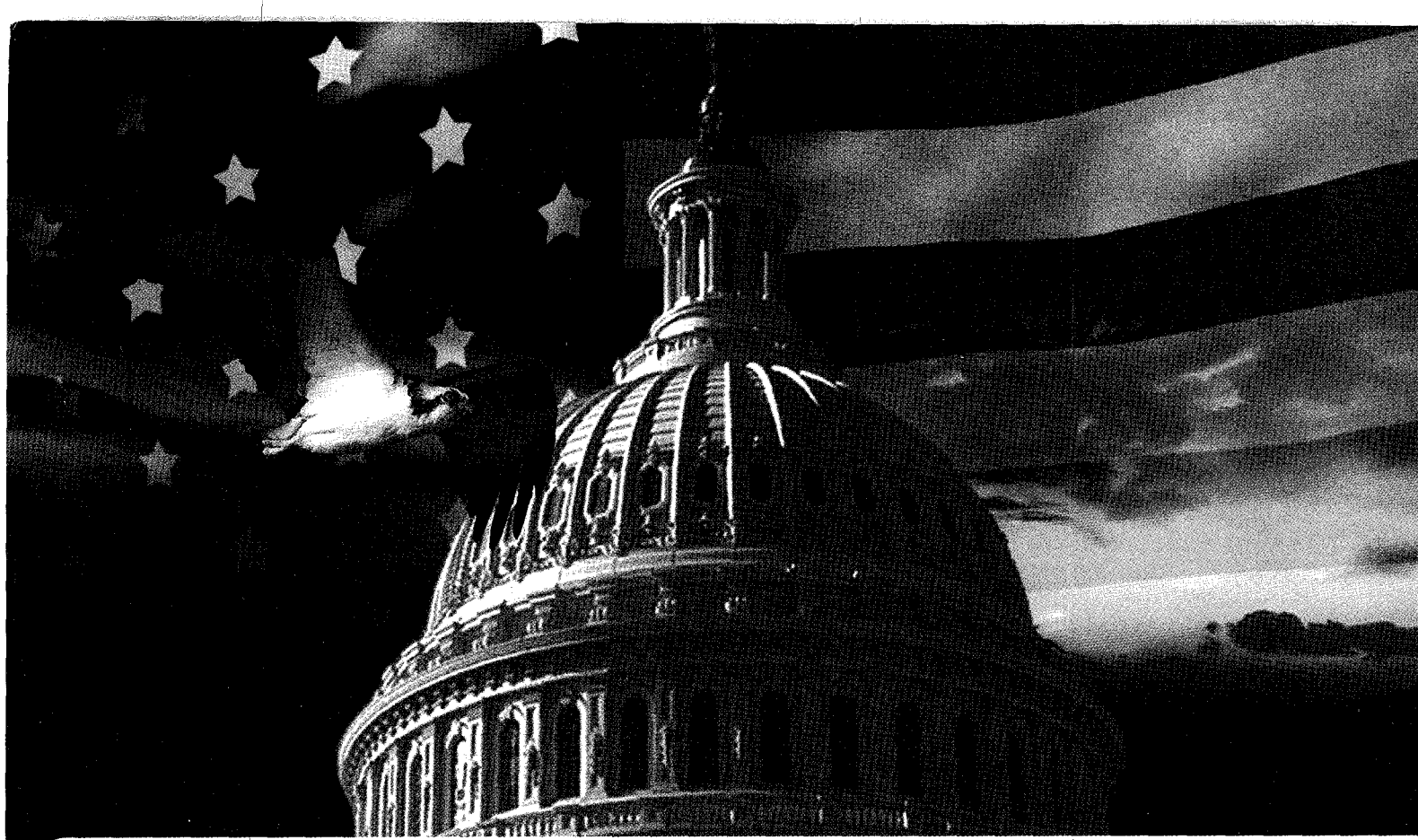

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